NEW MASSES

NOVEMBER 10, 1936 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

Liberal Individualism

By Stephen Spender

The "Nation" and Trotsky

An Editorial

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A LETTER comes from a NEW MASSES contributor now haunting Fleet Street, who writes: "The English branch of the International Writers is beginning slowly to move in the direction of the proposed Left-front encyclopaedia, which, by the way, is being really organized on the Continent. . . . For the liberals, Rebecca West is of the right heart, and so is Aldous Huxley, although he is a curious fellow, self-absorbed and psychologically willowy, full of dubiety. I think a Left front is going to be very strong here. . . . In the meantime the impetus is coming from the people: the air is full of hunger, Means Test, and women's marches; the government is frowning upon them, they stir up too much sympathy. . . . Edward VIII has bought his girl friend, Mrs. Simpson, a house in Regent Park and rents are soaring there. Smart work, especially as Edward owns Regent Park property. Baldwin went to Edward VIII and

said: 'Look here, as an old pal and one old enough to be your father and a smoker of an old-fashioned man's-man briar, let me tell you this canoodling with Mrs. Simpson in and out of season won't do.' Edward said: 'If you say another word, I won't come to your bloody coronation.' Queen Mary quit the palace in shame because Mrs. Simpson was installed there, and there were high jinks at Balmoral, Mrs. Simpson making the Scottish pipers play "42nd Street." . . . Mosley is backed by the Guinness [stout] family (this is really bad news as they represent the serious commercial capital of Britain), Sir Philip Magnus, hoarding and advertising millionaire (a Jew, too), Lord Nuffield (Morris automobiles), and possibly a few others. Lady Houston (electricity widow) has withdrawn in a huff and now runs her own pro-Hitler propaganda. . . . I hope you had pictures over there of the barricades thrown up by the crowd (Jew and Gentile) against the Mosleyites in the East End. I think a thrill ran through western Europe from one end to the other the day the news appeared."

Who's Who

STEPHEN SPENDER'S most recent book is *The Burning Cactus,* reviewed in our issue of September 29. His article in this issue is also published in the current issue of the British *Left Review.*

Rob F. Hall is active in the southern labor movement.

A newcomer to our pages in this issue is Eleanor Shoemaker, whose critical work has appeared in other publications.

Ralph J. Bunche, who teaches at Howard University, has written for the *Journal of Negro History* and the *Journal of Negro Education.*

Articles and reviews by William Phillips have appeared in various magazines, including the *Nation.* He is one of the editors of *Partisan Review.*

Theodore Scheel is having an exhibit of linoleum-cut caricatures at New York's Eighth Street Playhouse Nov. 8 to 22.

BETWEEN OURSELVES

The political cartoon on page 8 is Jacob Burck's first contribution to the NEW MASSES since his recent return from the Soviet Union.

Malcolm Chisholm, whose maritime sketches decorate Bruce Minton's article, has been a deep-water sailor.

What's What

LAST year, when NEW MASSES was in a financial crisis, the Friends of NEW MASSES decided that besides increasing the number of supporters of the magazine, the immediate need was money. To this end they made plans not only to attract new people to support the magazine but also to raise this money. Some members gave parties at which they raised from $25 to $130, and obtained many subscriptions for the magazine. Lectures, theater-parties, dances, and musicals were held as well.

At the same time the NEW MASSES was running a forum series and the Friends of NEW MASSES took blocks of 500 to 1000 tickets for each of these forums, thus raising at least $2000 throughout that series and at the same time introducing many new middle-class people to the ideas advanced.

By the time the forum series ended, the organization, which had grown considerably, felt that it wanted to increase its educational activities and with that in view began the practice of having open meetings every two weeks with an expert in a particular field speak each time. During the remainder of the year there were discussions on such topics as labor, politics, the theater, left-wing publications in many countries, conditions in the South, the Brazilian situation, Italy under Fascism, the sedition and deportation bills, with such outstanding speakers as Joseph Brodsky, Fred Brown, Elizabeth Lawson, Joseph Freeman, William Browder, Bruce Minton, Isidor Schneider, and others.

About 1500 signatures were collected and sent to Washington on petitions against the vicious anti-alien and sedition bills being considered by Congress, and similar action was taken against other attacks on democracy.

This year the Friends of NEW MASSES have undertaken the promotion of the magazine and the policies it supports. Open meetings with speakers will be continued, and a series of radio broadcasts is planned along the lines of a "march of time" from the Marxist viewpoint. The Friends of NEW MASSES feel that this will do more to popularize the magazine than anything they have done before, and they have taken definite steps to make the broadcasts possible. They need the support of every interested reader of NEW MASSES and they hope that their work in the past and their program for the immediate future will attract many who would like to contribute ideas and efforts.

Bruce Minton, editor of NEW MASSES who is thoroughly acquainted with conditions on the western labor front, will speak at the next open meeting of the Friends of NEW MASSES on the "Showdown on the West Coast." This will be Wednesday, November 11, at Steinway Hall, 113 W. 57 Street, New York, at 8:30 p.m. in room 717.

The class in economic and political problems is scheduled for Thursday evenings, and registration is still being taken at NEW MASSES at the rate of $3 for 10 sessions.

Flashbacks

THIS week, cracker-box congresses buzz. Why did Homer Zilch get in on his platform of "cigars, cigarettes, chewing gum?" Why didn't Edgar Auk, who promised boxing gloves, life savers, bird seed? Among the post mortemers, a few recall what happened another November to a candidate duly elected on a working-class platform. Seventeen years ago, while Red raids swept the country under the direction of Attorney-General Palmer and the Lusk Committee, Congress refused, 309 to 1, to seat Victor L. Berger, Milwaukee Socialist. Twenty-four hours later, on the first anniversary of the Armistice, Legionnaires opened fire on the I.W.W. hall in Centralia, Wash., capturing, castrating, and lynching Wesley Everest, himself a war veteran. Reason for the hysteria whipped up by the capitalist press: two years before, Nov. 7, 1917, Russian workers had assumed power. The Ten Days that Shook the World still sent

shivers down many a Park Avenue and Main Street spine. . . . The working-class spines of Parsons, Spies, Fischer, and Engels snapped Nov. 11, 1887, when they were dropped from the gallows, the framed victims of the Haymarket bombing in Chicago. . . . At Alton, another Illinois city, a pro-slavery mob killed abolitionist Elijah P. Lovejoy, Nov. 7, 1837. . . . And, by the way, America's first worker-in-office, the New York carpenter Ebenezer Ford, was sent to the State Assembly November 6, 1829.

THIS WEEK

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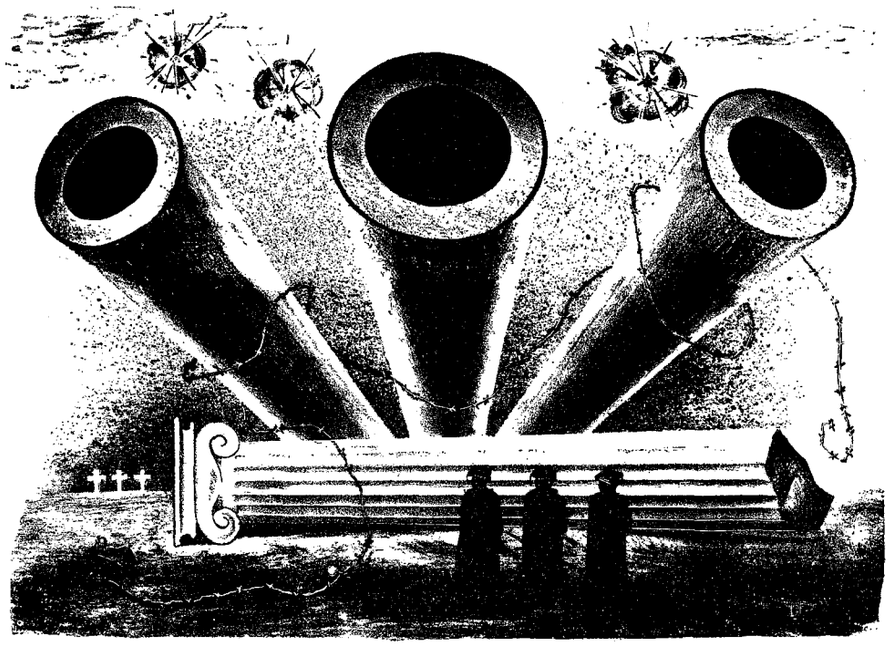

Lithograph by E. Morley

Liberal Individualism

A brilliant young English poet and critic analyzes the position of those friends of liberty who declare that the arena of politics is not for them

By Stephen Spender

AT PRESENT the idea of individualism is so attached to the interests of the ruling classes that to many people a classless society means a society without individualists. Thus, English intellectuals who regard themselves as individualists often oppose bitterly the classless society, on the ground that it would sweep away their individualism. It is interesting that the people who say this sometimes passionately declare that they are uninterested in politics, even reasoning that they are interested in individuals and not groups. These individualists, Godwinites without Godwin's passion for social justice, are compelled in times of war or crises to make a political choice. And, as in the General Strike, or during the 1931 National government general election, or in Italy or Germany, they have usually chosen oppression and reaction rather than lose their privileged individualism. Nevertheless, in seeking to save their souls, they have lost them, in the fascist countries, just the same.

It is not only the selfish and self-interested who fear the abolition of their own individualism, by which, really, they mean their own particular class privileges. Others, who may not consider themselves shining exceptions, but who care deeply for the culture, for the personal relationships that can be enjoyed today at a certain price, fear the breaking down of a class barrier which still prevents them from being overwhelmed by the flood of real democracy. They share J. S. Mill's horror of a democratic world in which the genius, good taste, morals, whims of individuals may be submitted to the ruling stupidity, vulgarity, puritanism, and dullness of the masses.

Whether or not one shares these fears, it would be best to confess that if one admits them at all, one cannot go on confusing "liberty of the individual" with "liberty." By "liberty of the individual" one means simply the liberty of a few people who are privileged by their possessions, and guarded from the masses by the barrier of class. In fact, the free individualist today is no more the product of an entirely free society than is the aristocrat prepared to fight to the last ditch sooner than give up his rights and his property to the mob.

Failure to recognize that property is the basis of individual liberty in our society explains the genuine dilemma of many liberals whose loyalty has been divided between the ideal of freedom for all in a classless society and the freedom of a few exceptional beings. Like Mill, liberals have been haunted by the specter of the democracy, to which they had granted political freedom, achieving real economic freedom, thus threatening liberties of the individual which spring from property. This fundamental and at times tragic dilemma has given certain liberal writers a vision of something like a doomed society. So that, although Henry James is the least politically opinionated of writers, yet his analysis of a small upper-class society living passionately individualistic lives—lives overshadowed by the mountainous evil of wealth somehow scrambled together to make their beautiful relationships, the ecstasies of their sensibility, possible—is profoundly liberal. Although it was far from James's intention to write political parables, I may tentatively suggest that he often dramatizes with peculiar vividness the division in the liberal soul: his sensitive and sympathetic young heroes and heroines, all of them sufficiently moneyed to have nothing to do—and James emphasizes again and again that money is the golden key that releases the imprisoned individual—are the exceptions, the striking figures set above the mass, whom Mill so admires. His apologetic American business men who have made fortunes and who now either themselves unlock the doors of Europe and indeed Life with the golden key, or else

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hand it on to some brilliant and untainted member of a younger generation, recognize that there is a contrast between the freedom their money will enable them to enjoy and the brutal background of competition which enabled them to gain that freedom.

James had the honesty to face the fact that in our civilization it is money—enough of it—that makes freedom, in spite of all democratic talk. E. M. Forster points the same moral in *Howard's End,* when his heroine, meeting a bank clerk who seems to show some artistic sensibility, tries to develop this gift by arranging for him to have a small fixed income. Virginia Woolf, in *A Room of One's Own,* insists on the importance of £300 a year. It is odd surely that all these artists have expressed this—or made, to put it crudely, a quite frank demand for some cash—as though it had nothing to do with politics. "Oh no," they seem to explain, "when we ask for the little annuity that will enable us to live as civilized people — to go to concerts, buy a piano, live in a room of one's own, take a holiday by the seaside, entertain our friends, be free from the anxiety of not knowing where the next meal will come from—we are speaking as *individuals.* That has nothing to do with politics. On the contrary, politics concern just the life we want to escape."

But actually their sensibility, being honest because it is artistic, has gone much deeper than their thought, because they have touched on just that point which liberals have so successfully concealed, where political freedom coincides with economic freedom. Liberalism stands for the liberty of the individual: but the foremost civilized individualists of our time, blushingly disclaiming the slightest concern with political questions, protest that individual liberty costs £300 a year per head: therefore it is an illusion to suppose that our democracy is free and that the most intelligent members of every class have an equal chance of becoming free individuals. "Oh, but after all we have done to educate them, they have a chance of rising above their class," protests the Liberal minister of education. "They can't rise," answers Henry James, "they can only become sordidly, stupidly, inextricably involved in the barbarous horrors of the money-making machine. If they can pass through that dime-museum, then perhaps — in Paris. But I am completely unconcerned with politics: I have no opinions whatever."

I say that these unpolitical opinions of highly civilized individualists express the liberal dilemma with an admirable nicety. The point at which the liberal becomes unpolitical, develops a blind spot and a deaf ear, freezes back into his totally separate individuality, is when the relation of political freedom to economics is discussed.

A SOCIETY where all individuals will be capable of enjoying the freedom offered to all is at present an ideal that no economic revolution could make possible. Too many people now living are spiritually maimed, stupefied, bitter, for us even to contemplate at present a world the majority of whose inhabitants will be civilized and happy. All one can hope for is that after some generations a psychological revolution, completing the work of the economic revolution, will take place in men's minds, to plant love where at present there are fear and hatred.

Today a small and rapidly diminishing stratum of society still exists in certain countries (although no longer now over wide areas of Europe) where it is possible for the individual, so admired by J. S. Mill, so solidly represented by the intelligent exterior of Henry James, or portrayed by him, to create and enjoy the tradition of a free civilization.

Yet, from the fairly wide base of the bourgeoisie, only a minute apex of this vanishing individualism plunges its head amongst the stars. No one could say that the propertied classes in England or anywhere else produce to excess exceptional and striking figures. The few people who shine are a small and failing band, liable to every kind of corruption, often seduced with the easy prizes that exceptional intelligence can gain today by mental prostitution to vested interests, or corrupted by the nobler addictions of deliberate self-oblivion which consumed even a Rimbaud or a T. E. Lawrence. In England it seems that the individualist is still able to put up a fairly good fight: he is trained, by having his hair pulled at school, to stern battles. On the Continent, except perhaps in France, and now in Spain, the individualist is in a desperate situation.

You may believe that the lives and works of exceptional people are unimportant. Yet if one stays for any length of time in a town where nearly all individual effort has ceased, and nothing considerable in literature, art, or music is being created: in Vienna, for example, where half the people are engaged in carrying out the monotonous routine of everyday life, relieved only by a consuming but uninterested and cynical sexuality; where the only traditions that still live on and seem to have a future are medical science and the performance, but not the creation, of music; where the only vigorous growth is underground, secret, political activity; unless one is constantly in touch with the revolutionary workers, one feels after a time that the pulse of the town is peculiarly retarded and the whole atmosphere deathly. From staying in Austria and contrasting it with the heightened activity, the creative excitement, of revolutionary Spain, flowering not merely in politics but in a reawakening of art, literature, and music, I came to understand a remark a great German writer made to me, which at one time I might have thought feeble and effete: "You are lucky to write in English. It is no longer possible to be a German poet."

Rappé

The European individualist is in fact a sick soul, and it is not entirely his own fault, although he is to a large extent the victim of his passionate desire to save himself, even at the cost of the rest of civilization: for to himself, as he often proclaims, he is civilization, and he claims the aura of civilization for all his vices and weakness as well. As soon as he recognizes that his own isolation is a symptom of the social injustice which produces him, his misfortunes become his own responsibility, so he must take part in altering material conditions. Individuals are not merely the vivifiers, they are also the guardians of tradition. They are not to allow themselves to become the walking graves of art. They must influence their contemporaries in such a way that it is possible for other individuals, who are born after them, to create. The heirs to Beethoven in Vienna may be the political rebels who are fighting for a life which will express itself in a new and great music altogether different from his.

Mill, as I have said, feared that the effect of democracy would be to release a babel of overwhelming prejudices which would restrain and subdue the man with exceptional talents. Everything should therefore be done to "emphasize the more pronounced individuality of those who stand on the higher eminences of thought," in order to counterpoise the dominant "opinions of masses of merely average men."

IT IS TRUE that since Mill's day the position of the individual has become more and more intolerable. Yet I think that to say this is due to the dominant "opinion of the masses" describes the fear that may in anticipation have depressed individualists, rather than a historic fact. "The more and more pronounced individuality of those who stand on the higher eminences of thought," suggests a picture of a countryside which has been ruined by arterial roads, roadhouses, petrol-pumps, and villas, but where the *laissez-faire* government, having encouraged all this barbarous ugliness of individual enterprise, has salved the æsthetic conscience of humanity by preserving, with the aid of private charity, a few railed-off exquisite patches of countryside, which exist like archaic fragments upon the whole country's wounded and festering body. Natural evolution seems on the whole to reject the uglier forms of life for the more intelligent and beautiful; industrial evolution, in the hands of private enterprise, inverts this order: the landscape resembles a body which has become all tail and appendix; the clear eyes, the hands and feet are withered.

Railed off from democracy, that waste land built over with the dirt-track courses of the popular press, inhabited by slum dwellers or golf players creeping home to their neo-Tudor skyscraper flats, Mill's exceptional beings stand on their "higher eminences."

Better than these deer-infested sacramental beauty spots would be a country damned forever, one feels like saying, if one detests a civilization which, creating ugliness, can only preserve beauty. Perhaps in the same way the

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Lithograph by Anton Refregier

individualist, shut into his ivory tower, would rather there were no individuality whatever than that he should exist as an admired relic.

In fact, to summon democracy from the depths, and then attempt to save the individualist rooted in one class and bred from capitalist investments, is a fatal compromise for him and for society. Better abolish him altogether.

Yet perhaps the individualist is in a false position precisely because he is so isolated and so carefully preserved from democracy. In other times the fountain-heads of culture and thought have been representatives of the small class that has alone enjoyed the benefits of education and political freedom. Today, the greatest part of society is educated, intelligence is not confined to one class, and the whole of society has a nominal political freedom; yet the individualist is cut off at his roots from the political life of the whole society and is cramped into the narrow confines of the one propertied class. What he is made to realize at every turn is that the class to which he belongs, and which is privileged to enjoy the world's heritage of knowledge, art, and travel, is not intellectually superior, does not represent the flower of any deep culture: it is the flower of money, and money is his country cut off by invisible frontiers from the larger life of the whole people. Moreover, he suspects—and may suspect rightly—that the class to which he is confined and which possesses the treasury of all the world's greatness, is nevertheless dead and unproductive, partly no doubt because its members are spiritually dried up by their common isolation. The real life, the real historic struggle, may, in fact, be taking place outside this country of fantastic values in which he is confined. Physically, of course, he may transfer himself; but if he does he cannot escape the economic dilemma that if he deprives himself of all means he must join the politically free, economically bound, and culturally inarticulate class; and in any case he must express himself in the symbolic language of the existing culture, which is bourgeois. In fact, the individualists who rise from the proletariat move automatically into the only class in which those "on the higher eminences" can breathe.

One may agree with J. S. Mill that the minds of exceptional men should not be dominated by the opinions of merely average men. Yet I believe that this evil cannot be avoided by putting limits to the extension of democracy, thus making individualist liberty unattainable to the workers. On the contrary, once begun, the process of democracy must be carried to its logical conclusion, else the individualist becomes the artificial growth of one pampered class. Thus today the individualist withers, isolated and futile in his protected social niche. And if we try altogether to undo the development of democracy by going back to a time without political freedom, we get fascism, a violent assertion of fake individuality by men of average or less-than-average understanding. To go forward, the masses must be given not merely political but also economic freedom, so that they may produce their own free individualists and their own culture. The future of individualism lies in the classless society. For this reason, the social revolution is as urgent a problem for the individualist as it is for the worker; he must break down his artificial barriers and join the workers in building up a new civilization. If he rejects their help and their life, he will find himself at every crisis forced into the ranks of reaction. For, ultimately, even the individualist who is self-consciously unpolitical takes sides. The unpolitical attitude is a refusal to look beyond the environment of one's class and one's country to the wider environment of our whole civilization. A moment comes when those who are not with the classless society are against it.

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Officers and Gentlemen

A distinguished revolutionary journalist reports on some of the interesting maneuvers executed by rebel leaders in their war against the Spanish people

By Ilya Ehrenbourg

IN Asturias, during October 1934, the Asturian miners received a liberal education in heartlessness, cruelty, and bestiality. In the present civil war they have received a lesson in betrayal.

When the news of the military fascist rebellion reached the villages, the miners rushed to Oviedo. Like volcanic lava from the hills, they flew to this, their still half-ruined, but doubly beloved city. Tens of thousands of miners gathered in the city park. They demanded arms. Colonel Aranda came to the meeting platform. He said:

Comrades! The Oviedo garrison is loyal to the Republic of the Toilers. We will not betray you. We are your brothers. Go to Leon. There is a rumor that the army regiment there is in rebellion. Do not fear for your wives and children. We will protect them against the fascists.

The colonel raised his fist and shouted "U.H.P." (Unios, Hermanos Proletarios—Unite, Proletarian Brothers). And tens of thousands of miners joyfully replied: "U.H.P.!" They got hold of some trucks. They went to Leon. Manuel Otero, a hero of the October days, was in command. They had no arms. With knives and old shotguns, they fought against the fascists for three days and finally conquered them. They did break through to Leon—where the commander said:

Go to Pontferrada. They have a large arsenal. There you will receive rifles, machine guns, and hand grenades. I can give you only thirty rifles.

And they fought their way through to Pontferrada. They were lined up on the main plaza of the town. It is such a lovely plaza, with an old city hall, old buildings, and a tenderly murmuring fountain. And the miners stood there, lined up in orderly fashion, peacefully waiting for the distribution of arms.

But in the windows of the city hall, in the windows of the old houses around the plaza, there were concealed machine-gun nests. The fascists opened fire upon the miners. A few hundred were killed on the spot. The rest fought their way back to their trucks. But the miners did not want to leave their comrades. They went back to pick up the wounded. And the fascists, from the windows of the lovely old homes, gleefully again shot them down. There, on the plaza, they killed Otero.

The miners rushed back to Oviedo; Colonel Aranda is there, defending their wives and children against the fascists. He must need their aid. . . .

Thirty kilometers from Oviedo, they came upon a military patrol.

"Hands up! Awaken, Spain!" Only now

Robert Russin

"Intervention is the purest ideal of Fascism"—Mussolini.

did the miners realize that this Colonel Aranda, who raised his fist so high and shouted "U.H.P."—this "brother"—is a rotten traitor. And fury, blind anger, filled the very hearts of the miners. And the fascist officers started shooting . . . and the miners fell. But others kept advancing, right into the deadly fire. With their bare hands they tore the rifles out of the hands of the fascists.

Toiling Asturias arose like one man. The battle started in the village of Sama. The Civil Guard (gendarmerie) had machine guns, but the miners quickly captured their barracks. The guardsmen were locked up in a barn. The guardsmen asked: "Are we going to be killed?" And the miners replied: "We are not like you! There is only one man who must not escape our revenge: Colonel Aranda!"

When the miners obtained milk from Santander, they fed the wives and children of the guardsmen. One of the guardsmen, José Rodriguez, asked for paper. When he got it, he wrote a single phrase: "You are not like us!" Meanwhile another battle was taking place in Gijon. The workers surrounded the barracks of a regiment of sappers. In Asturias, men are brave and honest. The miners, metal workers, and fishermen of Gijon trusted the officers who swore loyalty to the Republic.

But late that night the same regiment attacked the village. Somebody rang the village church bells. Somebody sounded the alarm. And the fishermen came with their knives against the fully armed soldiers. And women threw stones from the windows and doors of their miserable hovels. Towards morning the regiment had to retreat to their barracks. The Gijon workers were victorious.

The staff headquarters of the Popular Front is now in Sama. It is in the same house where, back in 1934, the fascists tortured the captured miners. I know that house well. I know the people now fighting around Sama. Their bodies still bear the scars of tortures. Their hearts are full of indomitable courage.

Colonel Aranda shot hundreds of workers. He took as hostages the wives and parents of the Popular Front leaders: Deputy Manso's old father and sister, Deputy Bueno's old mother, Deputy Fernandez's wife. And Colonel Aranda sent a radio message: "Lay down your arms, or I'll kill the hostages!" The miners replied: "If you do not want to fall into our hands, blow your brains out."

The "Truvia" is a munitions plant near Oviedo. The manager, Ravoella, stopped work and declared "neutrality." When the workers came to occupy the plant, they were met by fascist machine guns. Barehanded, they nevertheless captured the plant. Now they are working twenty-four hours a day, in three shifts. A workers' committee is in charge of the plant. Two hundred and fifty-eight miners were killed, but the plant was taken.

In the village of Mieres the miners' wives formed a battalion of their own. After defeating the rebels, they came on to Oviedo. In Tasco, a small group of miners held out for eight days under heavy artillery fire. They were in a half-ruined house, and defended themselves with one machine gun and some rifles.

The women asked: "Will you be able to hold out?"

"Nobody is bothering us," came the reply. They sought no aid. They did not want to take their comrades away from other tasks. And whenever the artillery fire quieted down, they would start up a gramophone and laugh.

While I am writing this, my thoughts are with the Young Pioneers of Oviedo. Only three months ago, when I was there, they gave me a paper, covered with many signatures. It was a message of greeting to the Young Pioneers of Moscow. It read:

"Comrades! We are preparing for the second battle. It will come soon."

I read today in the *Norde de Castille,* published by the fascists: "In Oviedo, the children, demoralized by Marxist teachers, threw themselves upon the officers."

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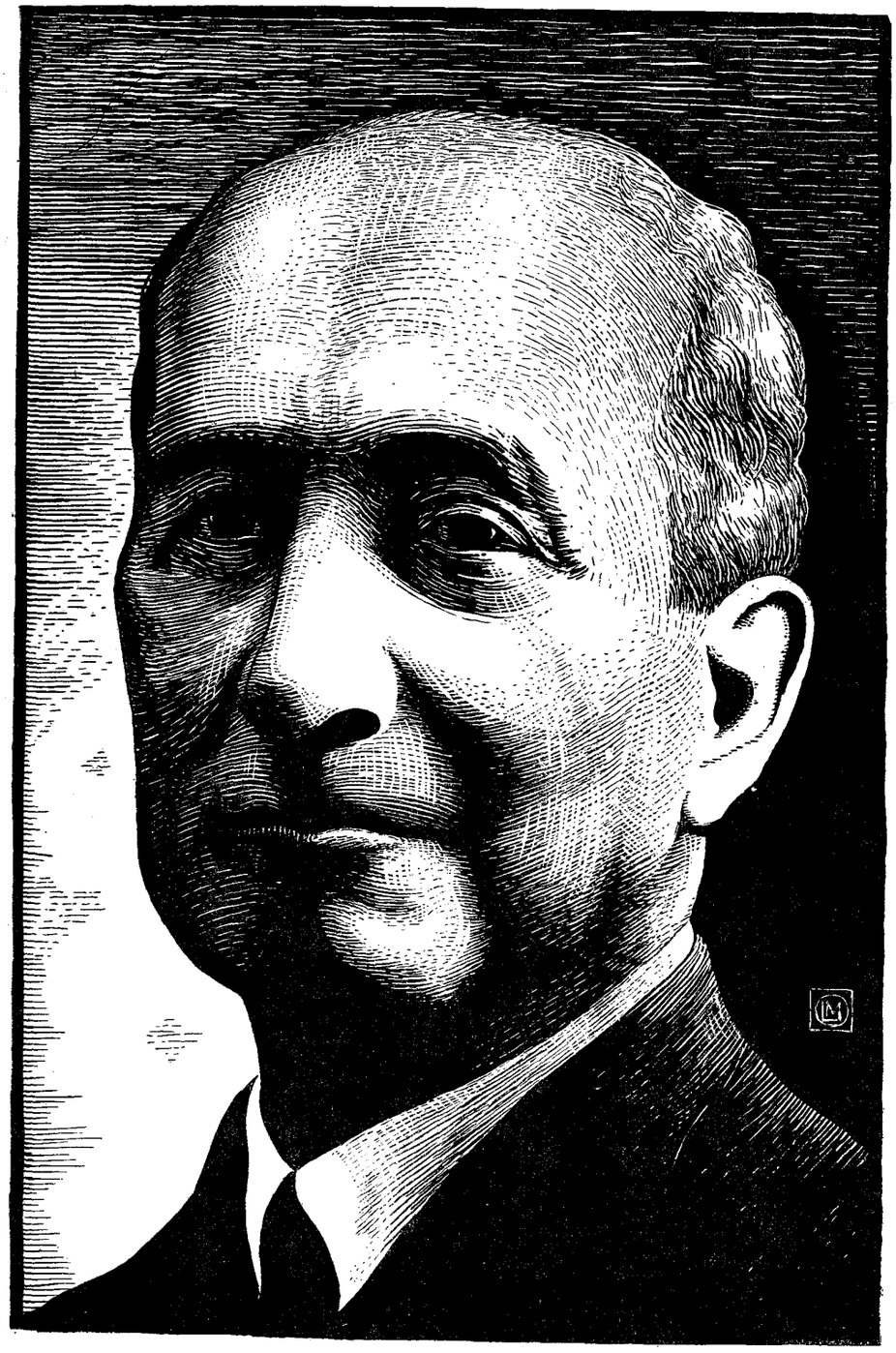
Proclamation to the Troops

In this official order to the government armies, the Spanish premier states Madrid's policy on humaneness

By Francisco Largo Caballero

WITHOUT prejudice to determination in attack, and to the will to victory of the forces that are fighting to crush in our country the seditious movement against the legal institutions and the lawful machinery of government, the leaders of the said forces, and all members thereof, should at all times be mindful to act up to the standards of humane warfare which should distinguish us from those who, turning their backs upon all civilized feelings, indulge—in the hour of momentary triumphs—in every kind of excess and cruelty.



Francisco Largo Caballero Liston Oak

When the action against the rising of the rebels was started, verbal instructions were sent from this ministry of war to all chiefs of the republican forces, to the end that, as soon as any city, village, or sector dominated at first by the rebellious forces should be brought again under the governance of law and authority, the treatment of prisoners should be humane, so that the penalty inflicted for the offence of rebellion might in no way overstep the limits of the laws and codes of the Republic.

Similarly, and referring to methods of fighting, the predecessors of the present government [the Caballero cabinet was created in August] directed that the forces defending the republic should resort only to such as were indispensable for the putting down of the sedition. The present government and the present minister of war now ratify, by the present written order, the verbal instructions to which reference has been made. The defenders of legality and of the Republic must be humane fighters, they will endeavor to obtain the submission of the populations in the grip of rebellion by methods which, though not lacking in the necessary vigor, do not lapse into cruelty.

It is essential that all should bear in mind that the struggle in which they are engaged is against Spaniards who, forgetting the duties of patriotism and citizenship, have embarked upon a hopeless enterprise; that we, for our part, are endeavoring to put down the rebellion by such methods of warfare as will inflict the minimum amount of damage upon the towns and villages that have been invaded by the rebels.

The treatment extended to prisoners by the loyal troops should be characterized as heretofore by the attitude of clemency which distinguishes us from the kind of undisciplined hordes which the violence of the rebels shows them to be. We represent authority and law; they are rebellion and chaos.

These standards, and the ideas expressed in this order must be the banner of the republican action. The minister of war intends this as a definite command to all loyal forces. To vanquish is not to enslave. Thus shall we be faithful to our constitution and to our ideals. Thus must we defend our own selves and our country from those who, in an hour of madness, have drenched it in blood and agony.

Long live the Spanish Republic!

FRANCISCO LARGO CABALLERO,
Prime Minister and Minister of War.

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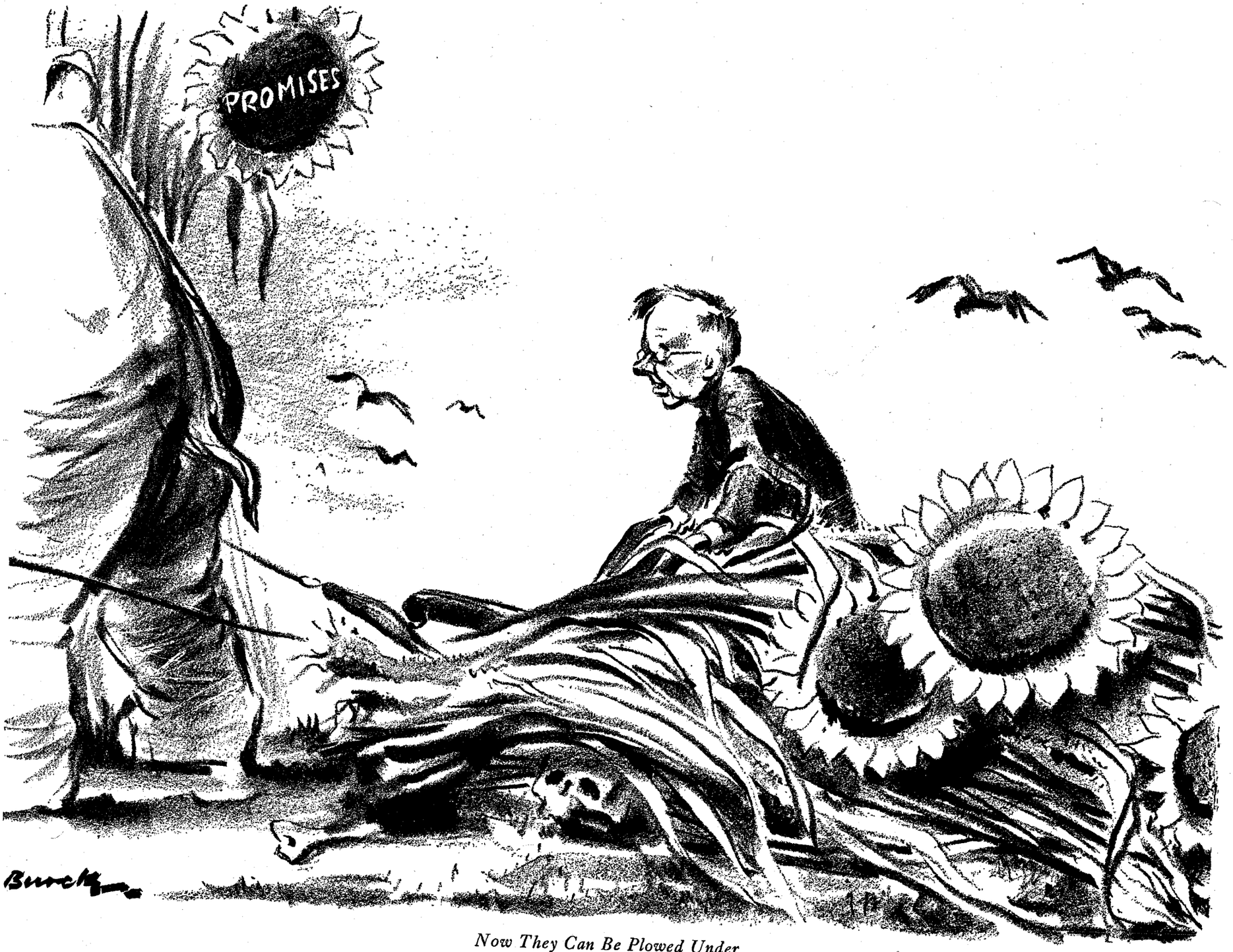

Now They Can Be Plowed Under

Jacob Burck

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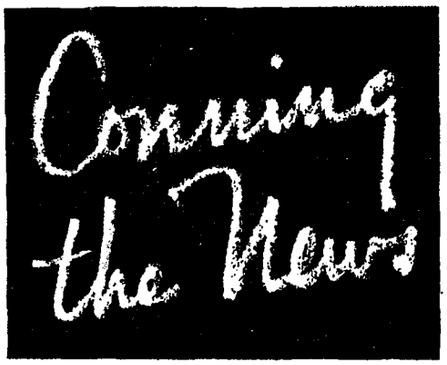
IN its final week, America's presidential campaign got down to a free-for-all, with no holds barred. One of the finest displays of political unscrupulousness on record was staged by the seemingly desperate Republicans in connection with the New Deal's social security legislation. In a burst of magnificent demagogy, the Landonites, who would eliminate federal social security altogether, launched a vicious attack on the act as inadequate and a burden on the workers. Notices on pay envelopes worded to give the impression that they were official government statements announced impending wage-cuts to meet the costs of the insurance and warned that there was "no guarantee" the workers would ever collect.

By way of reply, President Roosevelt pointed out that the act, which had been repeatedly condemned by the Communist Party as hopelessly inadequate, had the overwhelming support of the Republican Party in Congress (seventy-seven Republican representatives were for it, eighteen against; fifteen Republican senators were for it, five against). What worried the less hysterical conservatives was that the Republican strategy might strengthen sentiment in the next session of Congress to amend the act by eliminating the workers' contribution and raising the insurance funds by increased income taxes.

Despite his earlier pretense of opposition to both major parties, Father Coughlin threw his support to the G.O.P. Openly championing Republican nominee Bleakley for governor of New York, the fascist priest declared Roosevelt was "through," and hailed a Landon bandwagon which was invisible to practically everyone else. Coughlin said he had it on good authority that Roosevelt had made a deal with David Dubinsky to make him the next American ambassador to the U.S.S.R. in return for swinging to the Roosevelt banner the support of his "radical" following. Replied Dubinsky: "Only four months ago . . . the Soviet Government refused me a visa to visit Russia, on account of my known record of consistent opposition to Communism."

MORE sensational than the Coughlin support was the open use made by the Republican Party of the German-American Nazi groups. In the same week in which Landon repudiated the support of those who would introduce racial strife in America, the New York State Republican Committee broadcast a speech, in German, by Dr. Ignaz T. Griebl, Nazi leader and bitter anti-Semite. Urging his followers to vote for Landon, Griebl referred to certain administration figures as an "international clique," and inquired: "Are they Americans first or are they representing other interests, dictated by the call of their blood?" The Nazi later complained that the committee had censored some of his more inciting language, admitted that he had a list of Jewish officials in mind, and remarked that "My opinion was that these things had to be said, but they thought differently."



Covering the events of the week ending November 1

Roosevelt and Landon added hundreds of miles to their travel totals and thousands of words to their oratorical records, but it was all very stale. After conducting one of the vaguest campaigns on record, Landon wound up with a challenge to Roosevelt to chart his course for the next four years. But Roosevelt was busy, what with rededicating the Statue of Liberty, wielding a trowel on the foundations of Brooklyn's new college, and cutting an anniversary cake at a park in New York's East Side. Each of these ceremonies called for speeches, but they did little to clear the air beyond establishing Roosevelt's endorsement of liberty, peace, good housing, and fresh air. The President apparently was more than willing to stand on the record of his first administration, which he modestly described again and again as "a job well done."

WHILE the Statue of Liberty was receiving the timely greetings of politicians from coast to coast, Homer Brooks, Communist candidate for governor of Texas, was violently driven out of the town of Port Arthur by police. Breaking up a scheduled meeting, officers of the city owned by Gulf and Texaco oil interests seized Brooks, bundled him into a car, drove him to a lonely road ten miles from the city's limits, and tossed him out with the advice to walk to Galveston, forty miles away.

In Buffalo, Communists were hard put to it to find a meeting place at which Earl Browder could speak, but despite intimidation and violence, the party wound up its most successful campaign with a week of sensational rallies. Ten thousand heard Browder, James W. Ford, vice-presidential candidate, and William Z. Foster at an overflow meeting in Detroit, and arrangements were made for a packed house at New York's monster Madison Square Garden rally election eve. Widespread resentment against the violent breaking up of Browder's meeting at Tampa caused Governor Sholtz of Florida to order an investigation of the incident to determine responsibility for the lack of police protection. Warrants were sworn out against the assailants, whom the American Legion took pains to repudiate.

The Roosevelt Administration, despite all the reactionary efforts to paint it red, showed its true colors in a neat little demonstration of espionage. The license numbers of all District of Columbia cars parked in front of the Lyric Theater, Baltimore, last Sunday, were carefully recorded by Department of Justice operatives. The reason? The theater was the scene of a meeting addressed by Earl Browder. Said the mildly liberal Baltimore *Sun*: "What we should like to know is what the Department of Justice intends to do with the license numbers. . . . There are plenty of unpleasant speculations, but one hesitates to accept any of them as possible in America."

The world-wide movement of the church toward extreme reaction was checked on several major fronts during the week by liberal religious elements. A report of the committee on social services of the New York Synod of the Presbyterian Church warned of the danger of fascism in America, citing "with dismay" the imprisonment of Earl Browder in Terre Haute. The committee recognized the danger of "tendencies . . . which, if they continue, will assuredly modify and perhaps destroy the representative form of government which has been our nation's pride." From the Catholic Laymen's League Opposed to Political Ecclesiasticism came a blistering attack on Father Coughlin's "appeals to bigotry, hatred, and virulence; his cowardly Jew-baiting; his shameless use of his cloth to insult the President of the United States . . . his contempt, if not his ignorance, of American institutions."

These two American religious protests against the fascist tide echoed similar denunciations from abroad. Taking its first stand on Britain's fascist movement, the Church of England condemned as "monstrous" Mosley's recent fascist invasion of London's East End, and urged that in that section "Jew and Gentile must make a common front to meet the interference of outsiders." And in hard-pressed Berlin the Rev. Martin Niemoeller lamented the crushing out of Protestant freedom at the hands of the Nazis. No one dares open his lips, he told his congregation, without first looking about to see if anyone is listening. Reporting the sermon, the New York *Times* stated: "It is this cowardly attitude, according to Mr. Niemoeller, that has defeated the Confessional Church movement."

DIE-HARD employers on the West Coast, after blocking all negotiations with the maritime unions, were finally confronted with a strike that extended solidly from San Diego to Alaska and affected West Coast ships in Hawaii, the Philippines, and the Far East (story on page 14). Immediate cooperation with the marine workers, who walked out after a strike vote of 9 to 1 and whose stand was previously endorsed by the California State Federation of Labor, came from the teamsters and the grocery and food-storage warehousemen. Opposing the well-knit unity of organized labor in the West and backing the shipowners were the San Francisco Industrial Association and chambers of commerce. Plans were made to starve the workers into submission and thereby smash the trade-

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union movement. Sugar-refinery and lumber-mill owners announced their intention to close plants. Police were mobilized and Mayor Rossi of San Francisco called on vigilantes to stand ready for an attack on pickets and sympathizers.

The strike along the Pacific quickly precipitated action elsewhere. Port Arthur, on the Gulf, was paralyzed, and repercussions were felt in Baltimore, Providence, and Boston. Rank-and-file seamen in New York, who conducted a strike last spring in defiance of the reactionary officials of the International Seamen's Union, voted over the heads of those same officials to strike all American shipping in New York and other eastern ports. Longshoreman support in the East was smothered, at least for the moment, by Joseph P. Ryan, president of the International Longshoremen's Association, who only a month ago pledged to back the West Coast in case of a strike.

As the A.F. of L. convention in Tampa approached, John L. Lewis complied with requests of other members of the C.I.O. to call a meeting for November 7. On this date, two days earlier than the one previously set, the suspended unions will discuss peace proposals made by the A.F. of L. executive council. In face of the growing steel organization drive, U.S. Steel issued its annual report, listing huge profits and the resumption of preferred-stock dividends. "In many cases," the report added, "the wage differentials between occupations are either too great or too small," but it did not state how substantial the intimated wage advances would be—or when they would come. Significantly, the Illinois-Carnegie Steel Corporation, a U.S. Steel subsidiary, refused to meet with employee representatives to discuss wage increases, while company officials in Weirton forbade local businessmen to rent halls for steel workers' meetings.

In Seattle the American Newspaper Guild continued its struggled to keep William Green from capitulating to William Randolph Hearst in the *Post-Intelligencer* strike. The Guild insisted on modifications of Green's proposal that work be resumed pending a settlement. Chief change was the demand that the two men whose dismissal precipitated the strike receive employment during the period of negotiations. The Guild also insisted that Green serve as arbiter rather than negotiator, and that a Guild representative be added to the negotiating committee.

The union of New York's Home Relief Bureau employees by an overwhelming vote, totaling some 6,000 ayes, authorized leaders to call a strike if the Civil Service Commission should go through with its threat to subject the experienced staff to a new competitive examination. The proposed examination is designed to weed out "undesirables."

FOR the first time since the initial stages of the civil war, Spain's republican forces were reported to be in possession of arms which could match those of their adversaries. Loyalist armored trains and airplanes, some of the latter purchased indirectly from

Léon Blum—Taken to task

the United States, aided Madrid's "army in overalls" and gave striking power to a government offensive southeast of the capital. The action sent glimmering fascist hopes for the immediate invasion of Madrid by Franco's Moroccans and Legionnaires. Fascist columns were thrown back at Torrejon, on the road to Toledo, and at Sesena, on the road to Aranjuez, reopening the train route which runs from Madrid to Mediterranean ports through Aranjuez. Heavy fighting ensued as the Loyalists approached Franco's main lines, but the renewed vigor of the militia strengthened the feeling that Madrid is overcoming its shortage of equipment. Wanton massacre of civilians, mainly women and children, in a series of air raids over Madrid, pointed to desperation in the fascist command.

Arriving in England from Portugal and the war zone controlled by the Spanish Rebels, Frank L. Kluckhohn, New York *Times* correspondent, wired his paper: "The Insurgent army . . . is not the same as that which began the rebellion. The backbone of General Franco's army is now Italian, German and Moorish." What he had seen in Spain forced Mr. Kluckhohn to the conclusion that "General Franco's movement is extremely unpopular with the bulk of the people, who regard it as an attempt of the privileged classes to turn the clock back. Only foreign aid has made the Rebel success possible to date."

Ignoring such details, the International Committee for the Application of the Non-Intervention Agreement, in keeping with its grotesque past behavior, decided that the Soviet charges of Italian and Portuguese intervention were "unproven." And, with uncommon alacrity, Lord Plymouth followed through by presenting the Soviet member of the committee with Italy's accusations of Soviet aid to Madrid. Under the impact of the Soviet Union's exposure of the non-intervention hoax, British Labor Party leaders yielded to the sentiment among the party's followers and reversed the stand toward Spain taken at the Edinburgh Conference. Their new resolution asked that the British government promote an international agreement "which will completely restore to democratic Spain full commercial rights including the purchase of munitions." As Parliament opened, Prime Minister Baldwin and the imperturbable Mr. Eden appeared before the House of Commons to defend the blockade against the Spanish Republic. From the benches came the charge that the National government, through its ambassador in Paris, had coerced the Blum government into accepting the non-intervention pact. The foreign minister's denial was followed by a retort from William Gallacher, Communist Member from West Fyfe: "I wouldn't believe Eden on a stack of Bibles."

WITH Parliament about to reconvene in France, Maurice Thorez, Communist Party secretary, took the Blum government sharply to task for its Spanish policy. Pledging anew the Communists' fidelity to the Popular Front government, he nevertheless emphasized Communist dissatisfaction with the pace at which Blum is applying the program pledged by the People's Front and denounced the government's weak foreign policy as alien to that program.

Recent Nazi diplomatic inroads at France's expense, notably the Italo-German understanding and Belgium's estrangement from France, have given point to Thorez's criticism. Though spokesmen at Brussels still denied that Belgian "neutrality" would affect the security of France adversely, French military authorities rushed last week to extend the Maginot line of fortifications along the Belgian frontier.

Another blow at French leadership came in the form of a fiery address delivered by Mussolini at Milan. Pressing for all it was worth the advantage which the Italo-German protocol had given him in his struggle for empire, Il Duce struck out with fresh vehemence at Britain's control of the Mediterranean. He implied strongly that "a conflict which from bilateral would immediately become European" was in store if Italy's territorial ambitions were not satisfied. By again reviling collective security and the indivisibility of peace, Il Duce confirmed the efficacy of those principles as barriers to aggression.

General Goering, speaking at Berlin's Sportpalast, flayed foreign journalists who write about Germany's food shortages. Beyond taking up the cry for colonies again, the Nazis' newly-appointed economic dictator shed little light in his speech on the concrete measures he contemplates for the execution of Hitler's four-year plan of economic independence. He did offer, however, an enlightening commentary on the Nazi concept of equality. Demanding that his listeners reconcile themselves to a butterless, meatless, and eggless Germany, the two-hundred-pound Colonel General boasted: "We don't ask anything of you that we, the leaders, are unwilling to bear ourselves. Too much fat creates big bellies. I have been eating less fat and have reduced twenty pounds."

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The *Nation* and Trotsky

In which certain questions are raised about a traditionally liberal journal

An Editorial

A CURIOUS document has come to the attention of the NEW MASSES. The least curious thing about it is its source. At this moment, all the forces of darkness and reaction throughout the world are unleashing a violent campaign against communism in general and against the Soviet Union in particular. Hardly a week passes without some anti-Soviet blast from Hitler, Franco, or Mussolini. The Catholic hierarchy everywhere has called for a "holy" war against communism. Hearst and the Republican high command have been as unscrupulous as they have been indefatigable in their barrage of slander and hatred against the U.S.S.R. That is why the source of the document we have received is no surprise to us. We have by now become accustomed to seeing the Trotskyites add their share of libel, malice, and poison to the anti-Soviet campaigns of the reaction.

The document to which we refer comes directly from Trotskyite headquarters on Fifth Avenue, New York City. Otherwise it is disguised for the deception of the innocent and the unwary. It is headed "Provisional American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky," and is signed by Norman Thomas, Devere Allen, John Dewey, Horace Kallen, Freda Kirchwey, and Joseph Wood Krutch.

This document is trickily worded to convey the impression that Trotsky, an innocent man, has been accused of plotting the assassination of leading Soviet officials in collusion with Hitler's Gestapo without having an opportunity to clear himself, and that under pressure from the Soviet authorities and the Norwegian fascist press (ah, now you see who is *really* working with the fascists!) the Norwegian government has placed Trotsky under a prison regime. Trotsky, his American agents, and the few liberals they have misled want to aid in the formation of "an International Commission of Inquiry which shall examine all the available evidence and make public its findings."

This proposed body is described in the appeal as "neutral." If that were the case, the group which issued the appeal might have called itself the Provisional American Committee for the Neutral Investigation of Trotsky. But with unconscious frankness, the agents of Trotsky in this country have described it as a committee for the *defense* of Leon Trotsky.

This is an accurate description of any "neutral" body which could possibly be set up in this instance. The most likely candidates for the commission would be certain leaders of the Second International and their conscious allies and unconscious dupes. How "neutral" these people are may be seen from their reactions to the Moscow trial. Even *before* the trial got under way, *before* the evidence became public, some of them rushed to the defense of the murderers of Kirov. And now, when that trial has established that Trotsky inspired and the sixteen accused worked out terror plots to kill Stalin and other Soviet leaders, the "neutral" Social Democratic leaders continue to defend these conspirators.

CONSIDER the conduct of the reactionary leaders of the Second International, men like de Brouckere, Adler, Citrine, and Schevenels. In October 1934 the Communist International proposed to them that joint aid be given to the Asturian miners defending their lives against armed fascism. Later the Communist International appealed for joint action in defense of the Ethiopian people assaulted by Italian Fascism.

In both instances, the reactionary Social Democratic leaders showed their unwillingness to take realistic action to defend peace and civil liberties. They weaseled that they were not *competent* to enter into negotiations for these measures so vital to the well-being of mankind. They said they would have to convene the Executive of the Second International to discuss the matter.

Now, however, when it comes to defending the murderers of Kirov, when it comes to whitewashing Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and their accomplices, these leaders of the Second International feel fully competent to act without hesitancy, without investigation. They did not have to consult their organizations or convene the Executive. Instead, de Brouckere, Adler, Citrine, and Schevenels rushed a telegram to Moscow in defense of the anti-Soviet terrorists. This is how "neutral" these people are on this question.

Here is another instance of this kind of "neutrality." D. N. Pritt is a leading British lawyer. He has never been a Communist. He was present at the Moscow trial. Like all the foreign eyewitnesses he thought the trial was

A. Ajay

"Mr. Trotsky says we must beware of lobster Thermidor and recapitulation to the bourgeoisie."

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conducted, as the *Nation* would wish it, "according to the ordinary rules of evidence and the ordinary personal safeguards." On September 29 he was back in London. A reporter of the *Daily Herald,* Labor Party organ, interviewed him. Pritt said in the clearest possible terms that the trial had been authentic, objective, fair in every way. He spoke as a barrister trained in Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence. The *Daily Herald* reporter begged him not to grant any other interviews; the Labor Party organ wanted an exclusive, a scoop. Five days passed and not a word of the interview appeared in the *Daily Herald.* Pritt then gave his statement to the *News-Chronicle.* What had happened was obvious. The "neutral" *Daily Herald* had *suppressed* what they thought would remain an exclusive interview with a British lawyer who had witnessed the Moscow trial and had found it fair.

Reactionary Socialist leaders in this country have been equally "neutral." The *Jewish Daily Forward* and the *New Leader,* Old Guard organs, have openly defended the murderers of Kirov. Norman Thomas, liberal front for a Socialist Party now rotting with the Trotskyite cancer, also whitewashed Trotsky and his accomplices. *Before* the trial was over, Norman Thomas said he would not "accept the results of the ordinary political trial as conducted in Russia. In this he echoed the arch-reactionary New York *Sun,* and other tory organs which wept bitterly over the fate of these "old bolsheviks."

In addition to Norman Thomas, who refused a united front with the Communists, but took the Trotzkyites into his party, the committee for the defense of Leon Trotsky includes other people whose neutrality in this case is open to serious doubt. Joseph Wood Krutch has never, to our knowledge, defended the civil rights of the victims of American capitalism; he has been silent on Scottsboro and Angelo Herndon, to mention but two cases which needed defense. On the other hand, he has been notoriously anti-Communist both as a writer and as literary editor of the *Nation.* Many non-Communists have been shocked by his persistent prejudice in handing books by Communists to Trotskyite reviewers with one ax to grind.

We can only regret to find in such a "neutral" outfit a man like Professor John Dewey, whose sincerity no one can doubt. It is a pity he has been misled by some of his disciples who peddle diluted versions of pragmatism under a Marxist label.

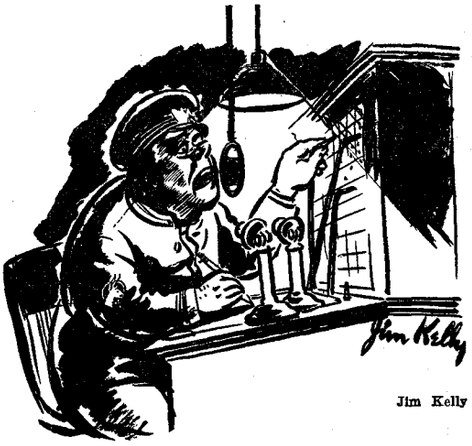
THE MOST curious aspect of the curious document which we received is that it is signed by two editors of the *Nation.* And attached to the appeal as justification for slandering the Soviet Union and whitewashing Trotsky is a reprint of the editorial on the Moscow trial published by the *Nation* in its issue of October 10.

Evading the actual killing of Kirov and the plots to murder other Soviet leaders, the *Nation* editorial expounds the theory that an underground opposition exists in the Soviet Union, and that Trotsky's criticism provides the "ideological basis of this opposition." The *Nation* bases this theory upon facts known to the entire world: the trial, confession, and conviction of sixteen terrorists. But it is precisely these facts which disprove the existence of any underground opposition. The eye-witness accounts of the open trial reveal that here was no political "opposition." Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Smirnov did not resort to murder until they had ceased to be the leaders of any opposition. The terrorists themselves admitted this at the trial in great detail. They themselves explained that *it was precisely because they lacked any mass support which could be led in opposition that they turned to murder.*

There is neither open rebellion nor underground opposition in the Soviet Union. A treasonable organization existed and functioned. It attempted to kill Stalin, Voroshilov, and others. It actually did kill Kirov. The leaders of the conspiracy were caught. They confessed. They were tried openly and fairly. They confessed again. They were convicted and executed. Accomplices are awaiting trial. More, no doubt, remain to be caught. Outside the Soviet Union others continue to plot and intrigue.

This is no underground opposition. It is not a political party or faction. The sixteen accused admitted they had no political program. They confessed that it was only a plot to seize power by assassination. As such it was doomed to failure. Why should the *Nation,* which has championed many good causes, describe an unprincipled band of killers as a political opposition?

THE MORE sensational organs of the reaction, in their eagerness to defend Trotsky and his agents, have resorted to weird inventions of "mesmerism" and "hypnotic" drugs to explain the confessions. The *Nation* falls victim to this journalistic mesmerism; in its editorial of October 10 it talks of "the mystery that veils the motives and conduct of the Moscow trials." To the *Nation* these were "strange trials."



Jim Kelly

"Car 37. Car 37. Pick up a nut at the Literary Digest office. He keeps trying to buy the joint for two bits."

What was strange? Where was the mystery? Sixteen confessed assassins were brought into open court. They were tried in the presence of foreign correspondents and the representatives of foreign embassies. They were given an opportunity to repudiate their confessions before the entire world. Instead, they corroborated their guilt, individually and collectively. After the prosecutor's summation, the accused again, each in his turn, were permitted to address the court and the world. Again they reaffirmed their guilt. The charge was murder, conspiracy to murder, and treason. The repeated confessions meant only one thing. They meant that those who confessed *were* guilty. Consequently, the verdict was guilty. What is there "mysterious" about such a trial? Who could find mystery in so clear and just a procedure except those who are intent upon the "defense of Leon Trotsky"?

THE BEHAVIOR of the accused, not only in the courtroom, but during their entire lives, offers valuable material for a study of political degeneracy. That degeneracy has been ably described by Joshua Kunitz in his NEW MASSES series concluded in this issue. We have first-hand evidence of it in the confessions of Kamenev and Zinoviev. But the *Nation* is suspicious because the accused seemed to *"revel* in confessions of guilt." Stuff and nonsense! The record shows the contrary. The prisoners confessed with the greatest reluctance. They evaded and dodged and lied whenever they could. They confessed only to the extent of the evidence produced against them.

Did Zinoviev at first confess that he had contrived the murder of Kirov—that little murder which the *Nation* considers too unimportant to mention? He did not. Instead, he tried to cover his guilt by sending the press a hypocritical obituary of his victim. When they were tried in 1935 for the killing

★

To Gilbert Seldes

After a Theme by A. E. Housman

When I was one and twenty
I heard a wise man say,
"Be careful who your boss is
If you should write for pay.
Write trash, lad, if you have to,
But keep your conscience free."
But Hearst was paying plenty
No use to talk to me!

When I was one and twenty
This wise man said once more,
"If you have brains to peddle
Don't knock at Hearst's back door.
Those who sell Hearst their talent
Sells pride and fair name, too."
And I'm still earning plenty
But O, 'tis true, 'tis true!

SLATER.

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of Kirov, did Kamenev and Zinoviev confess? They did not. They admitted to a lesser crime in order to conceal the greater. Only later, only when they were confronted with irrefutable evidence, did these terrorists admit that they organized the murder of Kirov. Nor was there anything peculiarly Russian or mysterious in the psychology of Smirnov. He did not once "revel in confessions of guilt." He squirmed and lied as long as he could; to the very end he protected accomplices outside.

There was no mystery here. The criminals were caught. The evidence against them was complete. They were confronted with that evidence. What the prosecution knew, they admitted. What they could conceal, they concealed. Where they saw no advantage in further concealment, they confessed. Perhaps they hoped by an appearance of candor and repentance to modify the verdict. This is no mystery; this is the normal behavior of guilty people in Russia, America, or anywhere else.

The *Nation* attacks what it calls "the official record of the court proceedings," a book published in English by the Commissariat of Justice of the U.S.S.R. It complains that this book summarizes parts of the testimony "in terms not usually to be met with in the records of a court of law." With all due respect to our colleagues of the *Nation,* this is pettifogging. We beg them to look again at the book which so distresses their sense of legal propriety. It is *not* an "official record of the court proceedings." It is a newspaper report of the trial as published in *Izvestia,* and says so distinctly on title page and flyleaf. The Soviet press account includes the full text of the indictment, the full text of the prosecutor's summation, the full text of the verdict, and an account of five days' proceedings, partly in running summary and partly in direct transcript of testimony. The *Nation* may not like this reporting. To us it seems an excellent job. But the *Nation* has no right to criticize the *trial* because a newspaper report does not read throughout like a court record.

The *Nation* considers that the conduct of the Soviet press before the trial was "particularly shocking." Immediately after the announcement of the discovery of the conspiracy, the press reported that the country flamed with demands for the severest penalty. "Given this overwhelming presumption of guilt," says the *Nation,* "it is at least a question whether these proceedings could be in any true sense a trial." Does the *Nation* think that the conduct of the Soviet press provoked Kamenev, Zinoviev, and their accomplices to make detailed confessions of crimes they never committed? This, too, is sheer nonsense. The essential fact, which the *Nation* ignores, is that the sixteen men made detailed confessions of their crimes *before* the trial. Every responsible editor in the Soviet Union knew that the prisoners had confessed. The Soviet press did not act upon *"presumption* of guilt." It acted upon *knowledge* of guilt based upon the elaborate confessions of the accused.

To the responsible editors of the *Nation,* "the charge that Trotsky conspired with the Gestapo is on its face the most serious and the least credible." This charge "fell like a thunderbolt" in the editorial sanctum at 20 Vesey Street. The *Nation* finds Trotsky's connection with the Gestapo more important than the central issues of the trial—the killing of Kirov and the plot to kill Stalin. The *Nation* cannot believe that Trotsky conspired with the Gestapo; it finds the evidence on this point insufficient; the "charge" is not proven. "It is Olberg's word against Trotsky's," says the *Nation,* which seems to prefer Trotsky's word. But why does the *Nation* labor this point? Why does it protest so much upon this aspect of the trial? On this point, the *Nation* says, the fabric of proof "becomes most thin."

It is "thin" here for very obvious reasons. First, the court observed certain diplomatic proprieties in the matter of permissible reference to foreign governments. Second, *Trotsky was not on trial.* The *Nation* goes to great lengths in attempting to discredit what it calls "this charge" against Trotsky. *There is no such charge in the indictment and there is no such charge in the prosecutor's summing up of the case.* The court's verdict merely says that Olberg obtained a false passport with the aid of the Gestapo and that he did so with Trotsky's consent. So far as the official verdict of the court is concerned, this is all there is to the charge that Trotsky conspired with the Gestapo. There is much more in the testimony of Olberg and the others; but since the court's verdict disregarded this testimony, we cannot understand why the *Nation* gives it such emphasis.

Nor do we understand the *Nation's* subtle moral distinctions. Is it any worse to conspire with the Gestapo than to murder Kirov? He who is capable of plotting to kill Stalin and other Soviet leaders is certainly not above plotting with anyone who will further that monstrous aim, including the Gestapo. There can be only one object in laboring this particular aspect of the trial. By concentrating upon a point which the court did not emphasize,

Dan Rico

Trotsky's friends hope to obscure his active role in the murder of Kirov and the plot to kill Stalin. But this hocus-pocus cannot alter the facts. The trial showed that Trotsky's group did work with the Gestapo, and every day's events bring fresh evidence that Trotskyism furthers the purposes of international fascism.

The logic of the Moscow trial, the confessions of the accused, the reports of the foreign correspondents, all refute the silly and dangerous position which the *Nation* took in its editorial of October 10. What renders that position all the more paradoxical is the appearance in the same issue of an article by Louis Fischer, the *Nation's* own Moscow correspondent, which completely destroys the pretense that "an underground opposition undoubtedly exists in the Soviet Union." Louis Fischer reports rising living standards; a new generation of able, intelligent organizers and leaders; the new and remarkable dignity and self-assurance of the people who "are endlessly grateful for their new existence." Throughout the Soviet Union, Louis Fischer found "endless pride" in the country's latest achievements. He testifies that "public enthusiasm is greater and more widespread than I have ever known it during my fourteen years in the Soviet Union."

With such an article before it, why did the *Nation* propound the fantastic theory of an "underground opposition"? Did it want to dignify the murderers of Kirov with a political status? Was the editorial of October 10 perhaps a deliberate preparation for the "Provisional American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky"?

The "defense" of Trotsky is being carried on from Trotskyite headquarters in New York. Now the conspirators are asking democrats for sympathy; soon they will be asking for money, since Trotsky's Russian agents are no longer in a position to rob the State Bank. What is the *Nation* doing among these men who engineered or supported the murder of Kirov and plotted to murder Stalin and Voroshilov? Are the Trotskyites circulating the editorial of October 10 with or without the consent of the *Nation?* If without consent, will the *Nation* protest the use of its name in defense of the conspirators? And if the *Nation* granted the Trotskyites permission to use that editorial, does it not owe some explanation to the public?

If the *Nation* wants to support Trotsky's criminal activities, let it no longer pose as an organ of liberal opinion. Let it openly and frankly declare itself a Trotskyite mouthpiece. Let the public know that it is the organ of a band of counter-revolutionary conspirators and assassins.

The publication of the editorial of October 10 was a foolish expression of prejudice. Its use by the Trotskyites in their bitter and unscrupulous anti-Soviet propaganda is a serious political act.

The public is entitled to an explanation. Ladies and gentlemen of the *Nation,* where do you stand?

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Showdown on the West Coast

After two years of provocation, the seasoned maritime federation takes to the picket line

By Bruce Minton

THEY are happy now, all the stiff-necked shipowners on the Pacific Coast, the *self-righteous Maritime Commission*, the Industrial Association, and the Hearst press. For over two years, ever since the West Coast strike of 1934, they have been pressing for direct action against the maritime unions. They have broken contracts, baited the workers, vilified the rank-and-file leaders. Now they have achieved their goal: at one minute past midnight on the morning of October 30, longshoremen and seamen, engineers and stewards, mates, pilots, licensed personnel, warehousemen—every union in the Maritime Federation of the Pacific—went on strike.

Perhaps the owners didn't think the workers would actually go through with it. Perhaps the owners didn't believe Harry Bridges when he said, "The [strike] vote is by no means a threat or a bluff. . . . We walk out unless the shipowners drop the demands which would force us to give up the things we fought for and won two years ago." Perhaps they hoped for a last-minute break in union solidarity. Whatever they expected, they miscalculated. Forty-four ships, the first flashes from San Francisco announce, are stranded. Twenty-five have been struck in San Pedro, twenty in Seattle, over one hundred ships reported in the first few hours. Portland, Vancouver, Tacoma, San Diego, up and down the thousand miles of coast line, 40,000 maritime workers form their picket lines.

The summer days of 1934 repeat themselves, with a vital difference. Two years have passed since that first great fight against the open shoppers. Two years in which workers have learned so much, have consolidated their positions, have welded the strong unity that sprang up spontaneously in the three months' struggle to win basic demands. Their leaders, pushed up from the ranks by the men, have gained experience, lessons in strategy. They have won a place for themselves in the labor movement.

Think back to those early May days of 1934. The longshoremen, after repeated delays, struck. For two weeks they stood alone.

M. Chisholm

Gradually the other unions joined their ranks, first in sympathy, then raising their own demands. The consolidation was slow. The rank-and-file strike committee was new at the game and faced the powerful, ruthless organization of banker-owners. Harry Bridges was unknown to all except a handful of San Francisco longshoremen. Some men still looked for help from Joseph P. Ryan, president of the International Longshoremen's Association. They had illusions concerning the New Deal government: surely President Roosevelt would see the justice of their struggle and would come to their aid. They had much to learn, many misconceptions to sweep away.

They met terror, police brutality, the ganging up of all the financial rulers. They learned, quickly, lessons that they have not forgotten. Today they strike again—after two years of the strictest forbearance in the face of continual sniping against their organizations: insults; sly, vicious provocation. Today the maritime unions are not fledgling workers' organizations just learning the ropes. They know the game—the shipowners have taught them. They understand the Red scare: they've heard nothing else for two solid years. They have developed leaders, men who have been tested. They have the support of the California State Federation of Labor, the support of local Trades and Labor Councils, the backing of 73,600 lumber workers newly consolidated in the Federation of Wood Working Industries. They see their brother unionists striking boats on the East Coast and the Gulf. Gone are the old illusions: no confidence remains in the federal government's coming to their aid. Joseph P. Ryan's influence has long ago been broken. The workers retain confidence only in their own united strength, in the leadership of men with whom they have worked for years, in the growing realization that has filtered into the labor movement up and down the Coast that the strength of the maritime unions determines to a very great extent the strength of organized labor as a whole.

The present strike went into effect simultaneously in all coast ports, Hawaii, and British Columbia—a defense of the 1934 agreements, a refusal to relinquish the gains that brought better wages, better working conditions, better life. The shipowners tried to withdraw the longshoremen's hiring hall and the six-hour day. The owners protested the sailor's desire to establish a hiring hall and obtain cash payment for overtime instead of the present time off for extra work. The cooks and stewards asked for decent, habitable living quarters and an eight-hour day within a

M. Chisholm

twelve-hour stretch, plus a hiring hall. The masters, mates, and pilots demanded preference of employment and cash overtime. The radio telegraphists, the engineers, the firemen, oilers, watertenders, and wipers made similar requests for modified contracts. And the shipowners whined that they would never yield. They pleaded and threatened. They planned a lockout which the unions spiked. They negotiated and then withdrew, dragging out the endless discussions to discourage the workers—until the unions' negotiating committee, after patiently trying every means of reaching an agreement, finally warned the shipowners that they must come to a conclusion or a strike would sweep the coast in protest against their anti-union offensive.

President Roosevelt's Maritime Commission stalled the men. Finally, without warning, the commission announced that it had no interest in the immediate controversy at all! It was merely "investigating," hedging to aid the owners.

The shipowners tried another tack, the old one that failed in 1934. They offered to settle with the longshoremen without the other six unions. Give in to one, was the theory, and then the others without this powerful backing would be easier to pick off. For a brief period, the longshoremen would bask in their victory. Then, with the remaining maritime unions smashed, the longshoremen would become the target of a concerted attack. A slick plan, one that would smash the solidarity among the unions. But the longshoremen refused to bite: the bait was stale; workers on the West Coast have had it dangled before them too often. They laughed at the crude tactics of the shipowners.

The Industrial Association, the Chamber of Commerce, the shipowners have prepared the Red scare, have organized their terror. There are caches of arms in Seattle. The police have been mobilized. The newspapers have mastered the latest in slander and hysteria. The strike will cost lives. Vigilantes have skirmished in Salinas and know their role. Reaction is prepared. But opposing it stand the experienced, class-conscious workers of the West, supported in the East and on the Gulf. The showdown has come.

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The Ghost at the Banquet

The shade of Sam Childs returns to haunt the happy gathering of the southern steel barons

By Rob F. Hall

BIRMINGHAM, ALA., Oct. 15.—Chairman of the Board Myron C. Taylor of the United States Steel Corporation, visiting the corporation's subsidiary, the Tennessee Coal, Iron, & Railroad Company here, announced at a banquet of Birmingham business men that the company was prepared to spend 29 million dollars on extension and improvements here in the immediate future.—*News item.*

IT was a marvelous banquet that T.C.I. threw for the Big Boss. Myron C. Taylor, chairman of the board of U.S. Steel, T.C.I.'s papa and the biggest corporation in the world, was in town. So was W. A. Irvin, U.S. Steel's president. The terrace of the Tutwiler Hotel was filled to overflowing with 500 of Birmingham's biggest Big Men, and as everybody knows, 500 Big Business Men take up considerably more room than 500 ordinary folks.

The gentleman from Wall Street announced that Mr. Morgan's company (Mr. Morgan is the real papa of T.C.I.'s papa) planned to spend twenty-nine million dollars in the Birmingham area. There is to be a tin-plate mill, two batteries of coke ovens, a blooming mill, a rolling mill, and a new strip mill.

In Birmingham there was much rejoicing. It began on the front page of all the newspapers, overflowed into the back pages, and then slopped over into the editorial page. Even Little Orphan Annie was affected. While she did not refer directly to Chairman Taylor's announcement, she did have a word of sympathetic appreciation for business men who, as she put it, "get rich because they work all day and worry all night."

There was also a photograph of "Happy Alabama Business Men" (as the *Age-Herald* captioned it), the happiest—and the most undignified—being Mr. Donald Comer of the Avondale Textile Mills. He had his arm happily about the well-nourished neck of the president of the Birmingham Savings & Trust Co., and both of them were carrying on like university freshmen when the Crimson Tide runs a long one around Sewannee's left end.

The spirit of rejoicing frothed and bubbled into the advertising, too. You could almost hear their heels click as the merchants came to attention and cried out smartly, "Heil T.C.I., Heil U.S. Steel!"

Judging from the pictures—after all we might as well admit frankly that your correspondent did not attend the banquet in person. This was due partly to a severe cold in the head and partly to the fact that T.C.I. neglected to send the *Southern Worker* an invitation. So all we know is what we read—between the lines—in the papers. Well, judging from the pictures, the biggest of the Big Business Men, Mr. Myron C. Taylor, is not the rejoicing kind. He maintained a grim and sober face throughout the festivities. Even the spectacle of Textile Magnate Comer imitating Ed Wynn did not amuse him.

It is possible that we are doing Old Stone Face an injustice. That "tough guy" expression of Mr. Taylor's may very well be an occupational disease, like the silicosis that affects miners, or the lead poisoning that gets painters. With steel barons, it's the Petrified Heart.

Or it may have been that Chairman of the Board Myron C. Taylor was grim-faced because he saw the shadow of the ghost that attended the banquet. Ghosts have a way of popping up at banquets; it is an immemorial custom, introduced some say by the Ghost of Banquo, who almost spoiled a festive meal for a murderer named Macbeth many, many years ago. It is more than likely that Mr. Taylor did see this ghost, because he had a special message for Mr. Taylor.

This ghost was that of an ore miner named Sam Childs who was murdered by a T.C.I. gunman named Alexander on July 4, 1935. Sam was a member of the Mine, Mill, & Smelter Workers Union and a Negro. These were evidently good and sufficient reasons for his murder, or at least Mr. Alexander thought so, and nothing was ever done about it.

Mr. Taylor did not recognize Sam's ghost, I am certain, because Mr. Taylor's duties have never brought him into direct contact with the ore miners and steel workers who make all his money for him. To Mr. Taylor, Sam was no doubt nothing more than a ragged man in overalls who seemed strangely out of place in this happy gathering.

The ghost may have worn a little American flag in his buttonhole, because it was on Independence Day that Sam Childs was killed. Of course I have no way of knowing definitely, because ghosts do not photograph very well, and no newspaper picture included the ghost.

Nor do I know exactly what the ghost said, because the reporters neglected such details in their otherwise lengthy accounts of the great event. From my rather thorough knowledge of ghosts, however, I can surmise one or two things which the ghost most probably whispered.

"I speak not only for Sam Childs," the ghost must have said, "but for all the workers who have been killed or whipped or beaten by your company gunmen, Mr. Taylor.

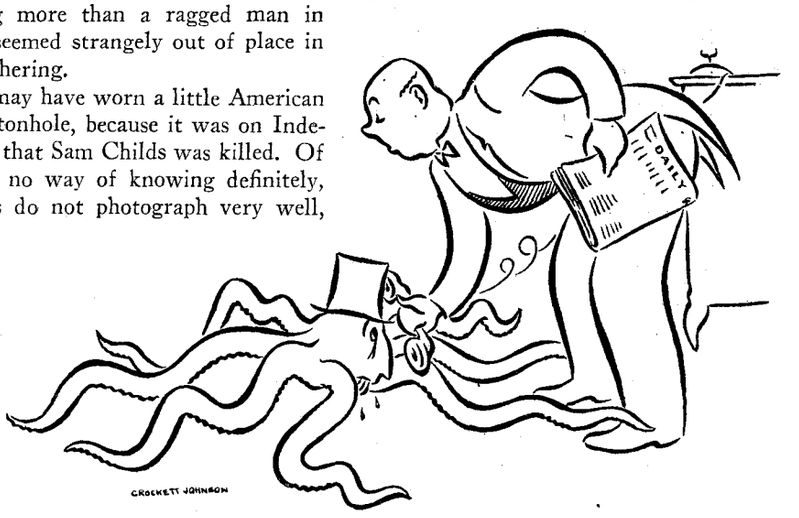
"I speak for the workers who mined the ore deep in the bowels of Red Mountain, for the workers who crushed and smelted it, for the workers who made it into steel, cast it into ingots, and rolled it into plates.

"I speak for the workers of the Birmingham area, Mr. Taylor, because it's a cinch no one else present here today intends to.

"The workers want to know what wages you will pay, Mr. Taylor, in your new Birmingham mills. Will you pledge your company to pay no less in those mills than the wages you pay in your northern mills? Southern steel workers welcome new jobs and bigger payrolls, Mr. Taylor, but they have no welcome for northern industries which come South looking for cheap labor and non-union conditions.

"Will your new mills hire company gunmen, stool pigeons, and spies, as your old mills do? Will your new mills also stock up on machine guns and tear gas to use against the workers?

"Will your new mills also discriminate against the unions and fire every union man



Crockett Johnson

"Did you see what the Daily Worker called me today, Brisbane? An octopus!"

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your spies turn up? Will you and your thugs and your bought politicians continue their efforts to stamp out democracy and deprive us of the right to organize?

"Will your new mills give Negroes the right to any job with equal pay for equal work, or will they carry on the same old campaigns to stir up hatred between Negro and white so that you can crush us both?

"With this twenty-nine million dollars, are you buying merely land, buildings, and materials, or are you also buying the soul of our city? Your corporation's money has already burned like a cancer into the heart of honest government and corrupted it, in every steel center. These 500 of Birmingham's biggest Big Business Men may sell our birthright carelessly, for a mess of pottage, but the common people of Birmingham and Alabama are not so easy. They will be vigilant, Mr. Taylor, vigilant and watchful in defense of their freedom."

At this point, someone handed Mr. Taylor a congratulatory telegram from Governor Graves of Alabama and the ghost, ignored and unknown, slipped silently back to the shallow grave on Red Mountain.

It is doubtful whether Mr. Taylor will report at the next meeting of the board what the ghost of Sam Childs said to him.

UNNATURAL HISTORY—VIII

A SAFARI into the interior of the American jungle of the Illiterati affords a rare sight for the amateur naturalist. Vari-colored birds and beasts, scrivening rodents, and scrawling reptiles there are in abundance, but it is not often that we have the privilege of observing such contrasting types in one setting. It is interesting to note that the Baltimore Baboon (*Boobus menckenius*) is not at all reluctant to descend from his lofty tree and embrace his supposedly traditional enemy, the Double-Breasted Pornograph (*Macfadden obscenus*). Although this bird is found near cesspools and other unhealthy areas it possesses a fascination fatal to other animals, who are attracted by the phosphorescent aura given off by its gilt-edged feathers. Another instance of Dame Nature misleading the unwary is the *Tribune* Tiger (*Lippmannus straddleus*) crouching to the left. He does not seem perturbed by the conduct of his fellow creatures and will stay in the same position for many days, ready to pounce, and then at the crucial moment will get up and walk away. Above him is the Redundant Drooling (*Vacuum brisbanum*). The large head is part of nature's camouflage and serves the double purpose of allowing it to belch daily due to the cranium being filled with fermented ink. The toad in the corner, commonly called the General Sulker (*Johnsonus tuffi*) is closely related to the frog, crawling with the head near the ground, as the short legs are not adapted to leaping. It croaks at least once a day and is noted for its ability to change color to suit its immediate environment. —JOHN MACKEY.

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The End of the Road

In his final article on the recent terrorism trials, the author explains the psychological breakdown of the prisoners and the reason for the death penalty

By Joshua Kunitz

THE testimony of Zinoviev will shake every revolutionist temporarily "disappointed" in the movement. "The party saw whither we were going, and warned us. In one of his speeches Stalin pointed out that there might appear, among the Opposition, tendencies to impose their will on the party by force. Even before the Fourteenth Congress of the party, Dzerzhinsky called us Kronstadters, traitors, at one of the conferences. Stalin, Voroshilov, Orjonikidze, Dzerzhinsky, Mikoyan tried in every way possible to convince us, to save us. Dozens of times they said to us: 'You may cause tremendous harm to the party and the Soviet state; you yourselves will perish because of this.' We did not heed their warnings. . . ."

It is not that Zinoviev and Kamenev and the rest were doomed to perish, but that they perished so ignominiously. History moved too fast for them. In a few short years the Soviet peoples, under the leadership they sabotaged, accomplished such wonders in industrialization that by 1933 all the old Zinovievite and Trotskyite counter-schemes of "super-industrialization" were dwarfed; and such wonders in collectivization that the Zinovievites' and Trotskyites' fears of the peasant kulaks appeared ludicrous.

"In the latter half of 1932 we realized that our banking on a growth of difficulties in the country had been vain. . . . We began to understand that the party and its Central Committee would overcome these difficulties," says Zinoviev. Kamenev goes into greater detail: "I came to the view that the policy of the party, the policy of its leadership, had won in the only sense in which a political victory is possible in the land of socialism, that this policy had been accepted by the toiling masses. Our attempt to bank on the possibility of a split in the party leadership also failed. . . . We could not hope for any serious internal difficulties to overthrow the leadership which had carried the country through the most difficult stages, through industrialization and collectivization. There remained two roads: either honestly and completely to put an end to the struggle against the party or to continue it, without any hope, however, for mass support, without a political platform, without a banner—that is, by means of individual terror. . . ."

ONE ceases to wonder why they admit everything. Of course they now admit everything. They twisted and wriggled and lied while they could. At the January 1935 trial, Zinoviev and Kamenev acknowledged, when confronted with irrefutable evidence, moral and political responsibility for Kirov's murder. But even then they had not told the *whole* truth, as the 1936 trial discloses.

One ceases also to wonder that there is no defiance. One can defiantly face death, knowing that outside the courtroom millions are in sympathy and that when he is gone, endless generations will recall his struggles with reverence.

But when he stands exposed before his own former comrades as a mere intriguer for power, as a traitor to party and country, a traitor even to his former self, when he stands stripped as the plotter of murders and as the actual murderer—secret murderer and public mourner—of one of the leaders, standing there stripped and alone—without masses, without a cause, without a banner—and with the stigma of fascist collusion fixed upon him—then one cannot be defiant, one has lost the will.

But why do they admit things so glibly, how can they be so utterly without embarrassment or shame?

Disintegration of character! A personality that has experienced justified public disgrace has been undermined. These people have been exposed so repeatedly and so mercilessly that by this time their psychological props have been knocked from under. Hence this gruesome collapse. He who has been exposed in treachery ends by referring to himself as a traitor, unblushingly. One can well understand why the defendants refused counsel. Everything brought to the surface, self-convicted, all they can crave for is mercy; all they can expect is death.

Hope of mercy, and the sense of impending doom throb in their last sobs and confessions. A few brief hours, and the sentence will be read. They stand—they know it with every atom of their being—on the brink of death. . . . Little Dreitzer looks like a corpse. "The political weight," he says, "and the biographies of all of us were different in the past. Having become murderers, however, we are equal here. I, at any rate, belong among those who have no right either to expect or to ask for mercy——" Holzman, too, is lifeless. No desires. No hope. It is an effort for him to open his mouth. His voice sounds cadaverous. "Here in the dock—along with me—is a company of murderers—not only murderers, but fascist murderers. I do not ask for any mercy."

Fisherman A. Walkowits

OTHERS hold on desperately to the last chance to be heard, but it is hard for them to begin. They grasp at the rail, clutch at the microphone. They gulp agonizingly from the glasses of water constantly refilled by the Red Army guards. The last word—and so much to be said. So many accounts to be squared. Where to begin? Where to end?

Ter-Vaganyan is typical. His first words are faint little cries. But the sound of his words, the very process of uttering them have a restorative effect. Each word uttered forms a link in a chain that holds him, though he sways in the abyss. He is back in life again, a politician again, an orator again. And however dreadful this moment, it is better than to look back, back into the abyss from which he has just returned. He grasps at every suggestion that flits through his mind. He makes an excursion into history; he attacks the others; he becomes a prosecutor, a revolutionary agitator; he exults in the achievements of the country; he declaims his newly found admiration and even love for the leaders of the party, particularly Stalin. He flatters. He twists and turns. He craves mercy. Though he does not admit it, he hopes for clemency. He brings up extenuating circumstances: he

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had told the whole truth the moment he was arrested; he had been misled by Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Trotsky; he had been a good revolutionist at one time; his services to the proletariat up to 1927 nobody can challenge, etc., etc. It is painful to listen to him. Even the judges stare into their papers in embarrassment. His words sound false. Everybody feels it. He himself feels it. *But he cannot stop. If he stops, he stops forever.* He turns away from the judges and addresses the audience directly. He lectures, he exhorts, he flagellates. . . .

Suddenly he stops. He clutches at the glass. No, he cannot go on. It is all so false, false. . . . This is not what he wanted to say, not at all what he wanted to say. . . . He sees the abyss again. He gulps down one glass of water after another. His shoulders shake. He keeps on passing his hand over his cheeks and mouth. Again little cries of anguish. His last confession is a sob.

Ah, the sweetness of confession . . . the release, the gratification, the sense of inner absolution that comes in its wake. *Mea culpa . . . mea culpa . . .*

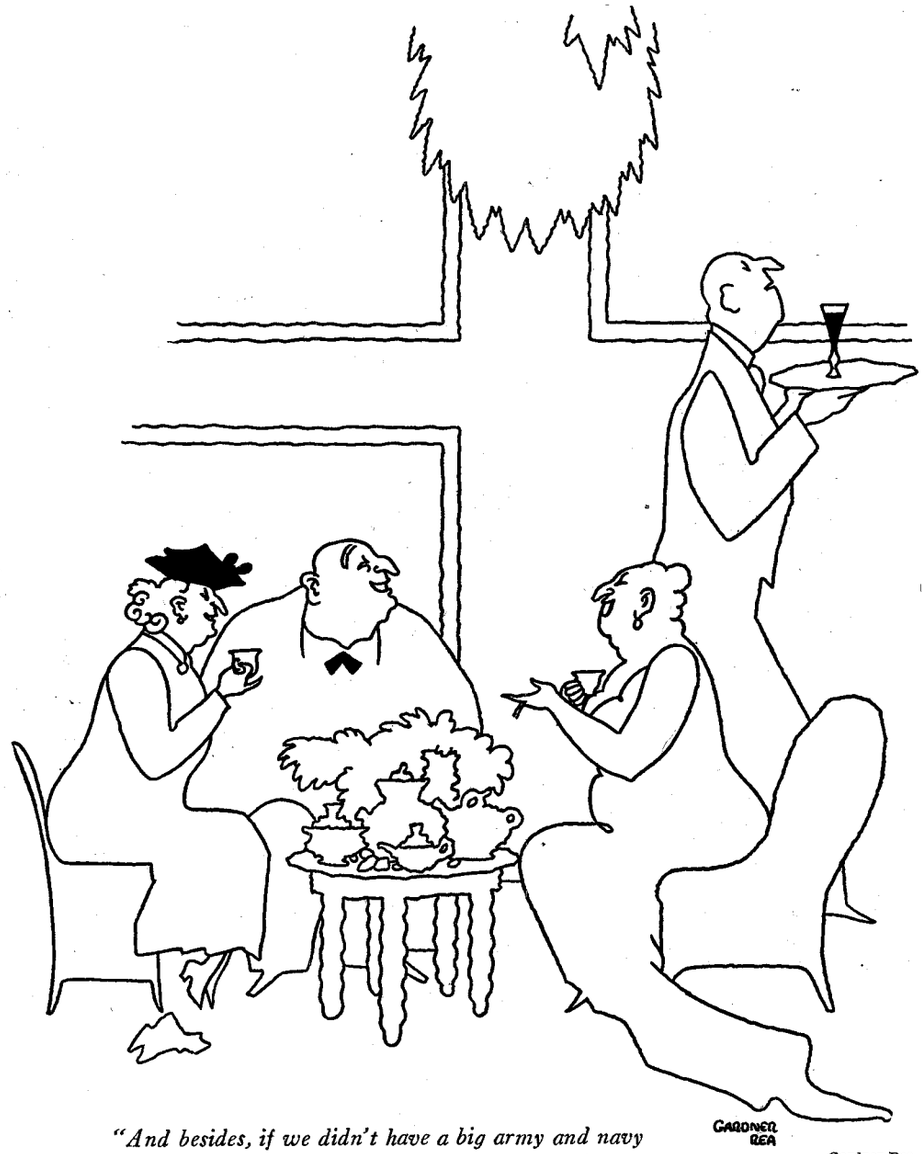
In these last tragic moments, one might be inclined to overlook the past, to believe, not only their confessions, but their affirmations as well. One might be inclined to believe Dreitzer when he, after acknowledging that he has the right neither to expect nor ask for mercy, whispers in a voice so faint one can scarcely hear it: ". . . and it is not necessary. I would only like to be believed that I have realized to what depths of monstrous crime I have fallen. I would only like to be believed that I wish happiness to my country, that I wish that my country, already prosperous, be as successful in attaining communism as it has been in attaining socialism, under the leadership of those whom we planned to kill." One might be inclined to believe Pickel when he says: "Death itself is not awful. It is awful to die a traitor. It is not the kind of death I would like to die. I would like to die better. I would like to die a patriot having earned the pardon of my country." One might be inclined to believe Ter-Vaganyan when he entreats the court to tell his former comrades, Mikoyan, Orjonikidze, etc., that he, Ter-Vaganyan, on the eve of his death, cleansed and purified, a good Bolshevik again, felt he had a right to stretch across the gulf of these years and shake hands at last with his former revolutionary self.

These people are thinkers, historians, scholars; above all, they were once Bolsheviks. One feels that they realize all the more sensitively, here, in the presence of death, that history is with communism, and that to them it is a form of survival, at this last moment, once again to identify their lost selves with this vast, living, communist movement. This perhaps explains Kamenev's last words: "If I couldn't be useful to the revolution with my life, I hope I can be useful with my death." This probably prompts Zinoviev's words: "I ask you to believe me, citizen judges, that whatever the punishment I am to receive, the greatest punishment of all was for me the moment when I heard here the testimony of Nathan Lurye and the testimony of Olberg. I felt and understood that my name will be bound with the names of those who stood alongside of me. On my right, Olberg; on my left, Nathan Lurye. I ask you to believe . . ."

"What about Kirov?" throws back the prosecutor, and the momentary illusion of sincerity vanishes.

No, Vyshinsky is right; the stern Russian comrades around me, the millions of indignant Soviet citizens outside this courtroom are right when they refuse to place any credence in these contrite words. Let the Citrines and the de Brouckeres be indulgent and magnanimous. They have always been thus with the enemies of the revolution. But it is the workers, the peasants, the comrades who sit by my side, these judges and this prosecutor, who articulate the will of the people of the Soviet Union; it is they, and not the Citrines and the de Brouckeres, who suffered through years of imperialist invasion, civil war, famine, factional strife, who have lost brothers, sisters, parents, friends, who have with superhuman sacrifices created their Dnieprostroys and their Metros, their state and collective farms, who have built a classless socialist society under the leadership of a strong united Communist Party.

It is they whose privilege it is to pity and forgive. But they cannot forgive. Their love for their socialist fatherland and the people who have led them to victory has been welded in blood and fire and common sacrifice. Stalin, Voroshilov, Orjonikidze, Kaganovich are not merely political leaders to them—they are flesh of their flesh, blood of their blood, the pride of their past, the guarantee of their future. Anybody who raises his hand against these leaders raises his hand against them. The wretches whom Citrine has so valiantly rushed to defend not merely *planned* murder; they *killed!* They killed Kirov, one of their best beloved leaders. Trust the murderers? Not even when they sob recantations in the face of death.



"And besides, if we didn't have a big army and navy how could we celebrate Armistice Day?"

Gardner Rea

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Is God a Capitalist?

Proving that a forked beard and a long coat, when worn with a certain button, can liven up a crosstown bus with a new slant on theology

By Louis Lerman

THE old man was wearing a Browder-Ford button. How often do you see an old man, with a split beard, carrying God under his long coat, wearing a Browder button? It's not a usual sight.

He got into the crosstown bus at Seventh Avenue, lugging a package wrapped in a Jewish newspaper. It was exactly what you expect to see: the forked beard, the long shabby coat, the derby—all except the Browder-Ford button. That didn't belong.

A fat dame ostentatiously pulled her skirt toward her, looked ostentatiously out of the window. Someone smiled gently, forgivingly, thin shaven lips only a little contemptuous. A man with grease on his cheeks looked up for a moment, moved to make room for the old man.

The old man sat down heavily as the bus jerked forward, almost spilling the package into my lap. People around us peeked their heads out of newspapers, then quickly forgot. An old man gets on or off. That's nothing. Even if he's wearing a Browder button.

He was sitting right next to me, his knees supporting the package wrapped in the Jewish newspaper. I tried to read the paper wrapped around the package. My Jewish is pretty bad even when a paper is held right side up, but when it's upside down . . . I couldn't make it out at all.

The button kept pulling at my eyes. Should I ask him? But what should I say to him after I had said, "Old man, hello, I'd like to talk to you." Should I say, "Old man, how come you're wearing a Browder button?" That would sound like a lot of crust.

HIS HEAD was nodding on my shoulder, jerking awake with the spasms of the bus. The package was resting half on my knees, half on his. I took my courage in my hands. Stealthily I pushed it. It began to slip down. I bent forward suddenly to grab the package before it fell to the floor. He woke up. "Dankes," he said. "You're welcome," I answered. "That button you're wearing," I said to him, "it's a Communist button."

"Yes," he said, "Communist." And then in Jewish, "I speak English very badly."

I smiled in return, "Well, I speak Jewish very badly."

People around us looked up. Went back to sleep.

I said, "I noticed the button when you got on the bus. I wondered . . ."

He grinned. It's funny to see an old man grinning through all that beard. He said, a little belligerently, "And why shouldn't I

Soriano

wear a Communist button? Am I a stepchild?"

I grew confused. It was difficult to explain. An old man, a beard that should be waving over a synagogue table. Even the word "Communist" took on an unaccustomed sound out of the beard.

"Well," I said, "well . . . I wondered. Most of our people are young." I mumbled something about religion.

He grinned again. What a grin. "It's not me. It's my son. If the members of my synagogue knew what it was. But they don't ask me and I don't tell them. Let well enough alone. Trouble comes without a welcome."

"Why your son, why not you? It's no sin to be a Communist."

"Sin? Who's talking about sins. Sins from above. I stopped believing in them a long time ago. They are made here, on Fourteenth Street, and a good many of them in the synagogue. My son thinks I'm an atheist. He thinks I'll end in the other place. I'm almost tempted to cut off my beard—for his sake. But how would I look naked? Besides, it's my only protection. When he threatens to throw me out of the synagogue, I tell him I'm going to cut off my beard. And he quiets down, quiets down quickly."

"I don't understand," I said. "How can your son force you to be a Communist? You mean he's a Communist and he insists that you should wear the button?"

"No," he said, "it's the other way around. He's a good boy, but a donkey. He thinks I'm too old to think, old enough to be respectable."

I began to titter. The whole thing struck me, to say the least, as a funny story.

"Don't make a mistake," he hastened to add seriously, "not that I'm a Communist, but at least I want to know what they are saying. I talk to my son, I say, 'What's the matter with the Communists? What do they say?' And he gets excited, 'A bunch of God-forsaken loafers, tramps trying to stir up trouble.' And I keep on asking him, 'What do they say? What do they want?' And he gives me a speech. 'An old man like yourself should be ashamed to ask such a question, to even show an interest in such filth (you will excuse me, that's his own language) except to spit on them.' The same thing the members of my synagogue say. So I stopped asking, I started to find out for myself.

"The first time my son saw the *Freiheit* in the house, he almost had a fit. For three hours he lectured me. But every time he threw a quotation from the Bible at me, I threw back two. Even Baalam's ass talked sense, I told him, at least he should try to. So he stopped talking about it. A new trick. He used to steal all my newspapers. I didn't know what to do. Of course I could always buy another copy, but in the first place, there's the expense, and in the second place, the principle. So I said, after the third time it happened, 'Listen, Labe Schmuel, every day I buy a paper and every day it's gone. Now I don't know who *steals* them and I don't care. But if it happens again, I swear by my grandmother, I'll cut my beard off. I'm getting tired of it anyway. Forty-five years is a long time, and besides, it gets in my soup.' "

I BEGAN to laugh out loud. I couldn't stop. People around looked at me as if I was crazy.

"Well," continued my old man, "and what was the upshot? I get my papers. I read them and nobody touches them.

"But now my son has a new trick. He says he'll have me thrown out of the synagogue. Now whether he will or not is another story. But whom do you have in the synagogue? All my old friends. I've known them for years, but they're donkeys. All you have to do is say 'Communist.' And I already have a reputation. . . .

"So I told my son I'm getting tired of this business. You are going to throw me out, hah. All right, go ahead. But so long as I have the tail, I'm going to wag it so everybody will see. You see this button, I told him, it says 'Vote Communist.' That's what I'm going to wear from now on. He went blue in the face. And I said, furthermore, one word more, and I'll put on a necktie, a red one.

" 'Atheist!' he shrieked, 'revolutionist, fellow-worker, after sixty-eight years—a fellow worker. . . . '

" 'What's the matter,' I said, 'is God a capitalist?'

"And that's where it stands."

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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★

The Twentieth Year

MANKIND will forever cherish the heroic fight of the Russian people which ended capitalism in their country and established the first socialist republic. And this week, when millions the world over will celebrate the nineteenth anniversary of the October Revolution, there will be uppermost in their minds the progress of the Soviet Union.

The celebration will emphasize the startling contrast between two civilizations. For at the very moment when capitalist society is rent asunder by crisis, fascism, and war, the Soviet Union enjoys the fruits of a widespread prosperity achieved through collective labor by and for the people.

Fascists hate the Soviet Union because it has taught millions the deepest lesson of life. Capitalists have blamed hunger, insecurity, and war upon the alleged mysteries of nature. The living example of the Soviet Union has shown us that these frightful burdens are the products of capitalist decay. It has shown us that the people, led by the working class, can abolish capitalism, dissolve the capitalist state, and set up the dictatorship of the proletariat. Upon this new social basis they can build a world devoid of hunger, insecurity, and war, a socialist world in which there will be prosperity and limitless opportunity for all.

The millions who will celebrate the nineteenth anniversary of the October Revolution will remember, too, that today the Soviet Union is the bulwark against fascism and war. The new Soviet constitution has shown that socialism gives the people not only bread and peace but also freedom. And remembering this they will redouble their efforts to defend democracy against fascism in their own country. For just as the Communists are today the staunchest defenders of democracy, so the fascists, in their efforts to crush communism, seek first to destroy the last vestiges of democracy.

Fascism is running wild, intent upon barbarism at home and war abroad. Hitler has declared openly at Nuremberg that he is preparing to seize the Ukraine, the Urals. In Spain, the Nazis and the Italian fascists are openly supplying arms to the rebels in order to defeat the democratically elected government and to strengthen their positions for the coming world war. In America, Hearst has openly advocated an alliance with Hitler and Mussolini against democratic France and the Soviet Union; and the Roosevelt administration has carried through the largest program of war preparations in our peace-time history.

If we are to escape the monstrous burdens imposed upon the peoples of Germany and Italy, we must check the reaction while there is yet time; and if we are to escape a world war far more horrible than the last, we must coöperate with all the peace forces of the world, above all with their vanguard, the Soviet Union.

Richard Correll

Peace and liberty are great goods in themselves. To those who have the foresight they are great steps toward that socialist society which is indispensable if mankind is to progress.

Now That Roosevelt's Elected . . .

THE results of the election should not be taken by anyone as an indication that the battle between reaction and democracy is over. The campaign served to unify to a very considerable degree the forces driving toward American fascism, and these forces will not be content to let the election results stop them in their systematic efforts to substitute a regime of open terrorism for the parliamentary constitutional democracy which still prevails. On the other hand, the greatly increased vote for the Communist Party, the magnitude of which will not be finally known for some time yet, is a clear indication that the American people are becoming more and more aware of the threat from the Right. The large votes for the American Labor Party in New York and for farmer-labor candidates elsewhere are further evidence that important sections of the population are through with the reactionary Republican lineup and with the undependable Democratic waverers, and regard a third party—a broad people's anti-fascist party that will fight for the defense and extension of democratic rights and social legislation—as the only way to emerge victorious from the battle between democracy and fascism which can only grow more intense. We, therefore, along with all honest progressive anti-fascist forces of the country, must now redouble our efforts for the building of a national, all-inclusive, anti-fascist people's party of workers, farmers, and the middle class.

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READERS' FORUM

The power of the word—Football, Gerald Smith, and loyalty oaths—Frankwood Williams

● On page 5 of the October 27 issue of the NEW MASSES, Ernest Toller in speaking about German Marxists says that "they underestimated the important effect of the word." On page 15, H. L. Stone says that "the press, with all its huge investments, its magnificent machinery, and facilities for molding opinion, just isn't molding opinion." They can't both be right. The question is: Who is?

Another question, on which I should like to see competent comment, is that raised by Mr. Toller when he says, that "simple-minded Marxist doctrinaires forget the dialectic, reciprocal effect between economic forces and the will-power of man." Such a viewpoint seems to this "doctrinaire" to come under the heading of Marxist revisionism. I shall, however, await any opinion that may be forthcoming with interest. E. D.

[In our opinion, the conception that the human animal has power to evaluate experience, correlate knowledge, and make a decision and act to control the economic forces of his world is a conception that is good Marxism and is an example of the dialectical nature of the process of history. We would say that a conception of man as being the will-less puppet of economic forces is undialectical and un-Marxian.—THE EDITORS.]

Here's That Kick

● Frankly, Robert Forsythe's article entitled "Block That Kick!" was lousy. Well, pathetic, anyway. If the alumni take their football seriously, they've got nothing on Forsythe, who wastes his time and a page of the NEW MASSES declaring that college football is tinged with commercialism—a very hackneyed generality. Suppose it is? . . .

I grant that the Yale-Dartmouth game has little to do with the future of Spain. This is as it should be. By the same token, Mr. Forsythe, a radical writer of some genius, should devote his talents to greater and more provocative subjects. F. K. H.

Another Oath

● No doubt NEW MASSES readers would be interested in the "children's oath," required of the Philadelphia high-school pupils.

"There must be no sagging back in the fight for Americanism.

"There can be no divided allegiance.

"We have room in this country but for one flag, the Stars and Stripes; and we should tolerate no allegiance to any other flag, whether a foreign flag, the red flag, or the black flag. We have room but for one loyalty, loyalty to the United States.

"We have room but for one language. The language of Washington and Lincoln.

"We have room but for one soul loyalty and that loyalty to the American people."

WILLIAM PENN.

Gerald Smith in Portland, Ore.

● Indignation prompted this letter—indignation resulting from the October 14 speech of Rev. Gerald L. K. Smith in Portland, Ore. I attended this meeting merely to ascertain for myself what sort of man he was. And I certainly did find out! My conclusions boil down to this: he is an ardent fascist, a two-bit Hitler, and a distinct menace to the American "pee-pul," as he is wont to call them. . . .

Townsendites predominated at the meeting, so Lemke's mouthpiece heavily stressed his allegiance to and his activity in the Townsend movement. Yet J. P. Charlebois, a national representative of the movement, wrote on October 2 to Ralph I. Shadduck, Oregon's Townsend chief that Gerald Smith was coming to speak for the Union Party and not as a director or representative of the pension plan, that "he has nothing to do with us."

Smith slandered labor by declaring that it is dominated from the Canadian line to the Mexican border by "Red racketeers." Then he claimed a belief in the principles of organized labor. This hypocrisy should not go unnoticed by those workers who favor Lemke.

He closed with the famous Bible-belching: ". . . true Christianity against the atheism of Communism!" And how the bald heads ate it up! He and Coughlin, sisters under the skin, certainly typify the garden variety of American fascists. It is only natural for preachers of the gospel to expound right. But it so happens that in this day and age Left is right. CLARENCE JOHNSON.

To Build a Library

● The American Friends of the Mexican People has received an appeal from the Liga de Escritores y Artistas Revolucionarios, more generally known as L.E.A.R. (League of revolutionary artists and writers of Mexico). This organization has recently moved to larger quarters at Donceles 70, Mexico City. Here they have begun developing a library including an English section. The organization lacks funds with which to purchase books and therefore asks that books, pamphlets, and periodicals be sent to Mexico City at the new address of the L.E.A.R. All sorts of material would be welcomed gratefully, particularly current radical literature.

JACK COHN, *Executive Secretary.*

From the Bottom Up

● Samuel Putnam's poem in your issue of October 6, "Call it Death of the Bourgeoisie," is typical of much of that school of wishful-thinking Marxists which gives vent to its feelings in the pages of NEW MASSES. Good or bad as one may think the picture created in his first five stanzas by such broad swirling daubs of his brush, we can understand the emotional values evoked in terms of "little children of the poor" and "rickets, anæmia," even though the line "clasped now in a statue's anthracite embrace" is a pale echo of Stephen Spender's poem, "oh comrades step beautifully from the solid wall." But when as in the sixth stanza the smear becomes Red it is time to accuse Mr. Putnam of wishful thinking. The fact is there is no "Red cry among the branches" in America. There are gnarled roots and gnarled lives and it is the business of a poetry which wishes to address itself to the masses of workers in America to do so not in terms of "Red cries" or "Hammer and Sickle" or the "Kremlin's dome" but in terms of those gnarled lives; in terms of southern labor organizers (Maxwell Bodenheim, issue of September 29), in terms of cranemen (Alfred Hayes, issue of October 6). "Moscow's Red Square" has a valid and integral place in the language of a literature only when that literature has grown out of and away from such material as is depicted in Gorky's *Lower Depths.* Gorky spent the best and most fruitful (æsthetically) years of his life producing such material, such "time-withstanding brick" in the words of Archibald MacLeish. "But in America there are no such bricks," continues Mr. MacLeish. Mr. Putnam is guilty, like so many others, of building a top-heavy superstructure of "facile optimism," as Horace Gregory puts it (*Nation,* July 25), when we have hardly the brick with which to work. When we have produced more verse out of the defeated faces in the welfare stations, when enough poetry has grown out of the emotions and self-assertions of the "swinish multitude," when our people have become conscious of their political power and the way to use it, then an American Kremlin in place of the new Supreme Court building in Washington will be poetically justified as a symbol. Today we must talk in terms of that Supreme Court and how it affects our economic destinies. Let's build our verses, like our political party, from the bottom up, Mr. Putnam, not from the top down. HARRY COOPER.

Albert Pross

A Favorite Feature

● To me every article in the NEW MASSES is a gem to be read over and over again, but Conning the News is the most important feature from the point of view of enlightening the readers on the class struggle. After reading the news in the capitalist press, as most people unfortunately do, it is of tremendous educational value to read your comment on it from the standpoint of the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

Thanks to you and the tireless efforts of our beloved leader, Comrade Browder, even in my section only three parties existed in this campaign.

M. P. K.

A Frankwood Williams Memorial

● Dr. Frankwood Williams's work was so well known to many of your readers that we believe you will wish to bring to their notice the plans for the memorial meeting to be held at the New School for Social Research, 66 West 12th Street, New York, on Sunday, November 15, at four o'clock, centering in the theme "The Individual and Society," which we believe expresses the field of his contribution to thought and action. The speakers will include Dr. Arthur H. Ruggles, President of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, Bertha Reynolds, of the Smith College School of Social Work, John A. Kingsbury, Alvin Johnson, and Harry Lurie, who will speak of Dr. Williams's work in mental hygiene, in social work, and in education, and of the impact of the Soviet Union on his thinking.

In the evening there will be music and an address under the auspices of Dr. Williams's medical colleagues at the Academy of Medicine, Fifth Avenue and 103rd Street, New York.

Admission will be free, but by ticket only. For the afternoon, tickets can be secured by personal application at the New School for Social Research, 66 West 12th Street, New York; or by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to one of the organizations joining in the auspices, namely, American Association of Social Workers, New York School of Social Work, New School for Social Research, Inter-Professional Association, Federation of Children's Organizations, American Russian Institute, Friends of the Soviet Union, Smith College School of Social Work, National Committee for Mental Hygiene, People's Health Education League, *Survey* Associates, *Social Work Today.* In writing for tickets, it is best to choose the organization with which one is connected.

For the evening meeting, application should be made to the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 50 West 50th Street, New York.

MARY VAN KLEECK.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Sherwood Anderson's progress—Anti-Semitism, "pure" music, and Negro capitalists

IN a sense, *Kit Brandon* (Scribners, $2.50) is evidence that Sherwood Anderson, like the warped people of his early stories, cannot adjust himself to the forces of contemporary America. For Anderson, still searching for meaning and hope, has once more written a novel of loneliness, of aborted ideals, of sensuous abandon as a recoil from the world. True, his themes have been brought up to date, and the outlines of recent experience are visible, but at bottom it is the old Anderson, puzzled and awed by the immensity of life. The mystification and nostalgia that were once accepted as the quality of his characters now seem to reside in Anderson himself.

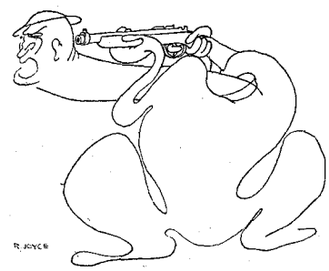
When Anderson, catching the first note of post-war cynicism, gave us his gallery of grotesques in *Winesburg, Ohio* and *The Triumph of the Egg*, he was but reflecting the bewilderment and frustration which he saw in town life. At that time the shattering of the sacred cult of opportunity and progress, performed by almost all of Anderson's literary generation, was an act not only of literary pioneering but of social rebellion. The heyday of expansion was coming to an end, and people fumbled in the dark for ways to a better life. Boys and girls in small villages, finding their adolescent desires thwarted, developed all kinds of psychological enormities. And it was Anderson's achievement to express this mood of furtive searching in the young and resignation in the old. But it was not long before this tragic sense of life was supplanted by social doctrines which offered a solution for defeat and frustration. Literature, ever responsive to the churning of history, embarked on a study of people in terms of their more objective social relations. At this point, Anderson, still a rebel and with a strong sense of the contemporary, turned to communism. "Let us have more criminal syndicalism," he said in the pages of the NEW MASSES, and he wrote a strike novel, *Beyond Desire*, espousing the cause of the textile workers. But while the sentiments of the novel were commendable, it was already clear that Anderson's experience was too deeply rooted in the mystical drives of character, in the overtones of perversion, to encompass the necessary realism of social fiction. And now *Kit Brandon* is patently an admission of this failure, for Anderson is back to as much of the old mood of groping and solitude as he can recapture. Though he has not completely retired into the inner world of psychological shadows, whatever there is of the objective world in *Kit Brandon* is closer to the streamlined realism of Hollywood.

Kit Brandon is a synthetic heroine who, in her own life, reënacts the three stages of Anderson's career. Brought up in the morbid and sodden environment of a Blue Ridge mountain farm, she yearns for the adventure and mystery of the city as she ripens into womanhood. Her release comes through a sexual incident when her father bathes her one day in a brook, his hands searching her young body. That night she escapes to a nearby mill town and enters her proletarian phase. We glimpse the mechanized brutality of mill work, but it is really with the symbols of "escape" that Anderson is here concerned.

Agnes, a large, uncomely woman, expresses her defiance in a vague but militant radicalism; Frank, a shy youth given to reverie, dies of tuberculosis. And Kit, to whom the mill world is but an education in resourcefulness, leaves for another job in a five-and-ten store. All this time, conscious of her attractiveness to men, Kit has been acquiring that mastery over her personality which provides the poise and deception necessary in her sexual relations. Thus detached from the responsibilities of her social world, she embarks on her third phase, a high-powered rum-running racket, by marrying the son of its leader. Soon tiring of her spineless husband, she abandons herself to the exotic dangers of lawlessness and becomes one of the most daring night drivers of the gang. At the end Kit is released from this emotional athleticism, which can no longer satisfy some hidden desire for the more cozy sentiments of home and friendship, when the police break up the racket. And Kit hovers over the edge of the story like an aviator looking for a place to land—a somewhat chastened and more mature woman, to be sure, but still seeking, with the eagerness of an adolescent, a new horizon. If we are back to Winesburg, Ohio, it is because Winesburg is now America.

Kit Brandon is apparently a symbol of human desiccation; at least that seems to be the meaning of Anderson's repeated comparisons between the jungle morality of the bootleggers and that of commercial enterprise. In a world where success is but another form of isolation, Kit Brandon's psychological fulfillment, according to Anderson, lies in the hope that "there might be some other puzzled and baffled young one with whom she could make a real partnership in living." But Kit has never been able to lose her carefully nurtured identity in some human relationship, whether physical or sexual or even merely sentimental. Thus Anderson has landed us in the familiar arena of Freud where the libido battles with the agents of repression, and the world of social determinism recedes, like a distant skyline, into the mists of pathology. That Anderson has been influenced by Freudian explanations of frustrations is not in itself a cause for alarm, for much of the authenticity of his earlier stories of obsessions is traceable to the theories of psychoanalysis. What is distressing is that Kit Brandon, who must make conscious social and moral judgments, is left with the same suppressed longings, the same queries that Anderson's adolescents had in 1916. Or have these queries now become the answers of Sherwood Anderson?

WILLIAM PHILLIPS.



Robert Joyce

Nazi Anti-Semitism

THE YELLOW SPOT: THE EXTERMINATION OF THE JEWS IN GERMANY. *A documentary study with an introduction by the Bishop of Durham. Knight, Inc.* $2.

THIS study goes to the fountain-head of Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda. An official boycott, April 1, 1933, and a few officially conducted pogroms inaugurated the campaign. After that human nature was expected to take the National-Socialist course. More official action, however, was needed. "Non-Aryans" were invited to withdraw from the Berlin Chamber of Commerce, from the Labor Front, from the Reich Chamber of Culture, to retire from the Civil Service and relinquish their pensions. It was suddenly found necessary to close a surprising number of Jewish shops and factories because of "unhygienic conditions." Inconsiderate Jewish merchants canceled orders with wholesalers. Who could ask for further proof of their unscrupulousness or better justification for intensified boycott? Classified-ad columns overflowed with announcements of firms for sale to "Aryans" on mysteriously reasonable terms, and the government obligingly created a fund to finance loans for such transactions. Rural coöperative marketing associations coöperatively prohibited the sale of slaughtered cattle to Jews and closed rural markets to Jewish traders. The *Sturmer*, a pornographic sheet that spices salacity with sadism, saw to it that everybody knew all about Jewish "ritual murder."

Yet inexplicably there remained in Germany by September 1935 a disturbing number of freaks who "still can't tear themselves away from the Jews." The government's solution was the Nuremburg decrees. Now it was legal to cut recalcitrants off the relief rolls, to try them for race defilement, to dissolve and

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prevent intermarriage; now it was legal to discharge employees for being Jewish (war veterans or not), to refuse Jews service of gas and electricity, to bar them from hospitals, schools, foodstores, shops, libraries, museums, theaters, sport clubs, bathing beaches, public parks, from the rental or purchase of property. Still, *Sturmer* boxes (bulletin boards erected in the public squares of every German village, town, and city, to pillory "Jew lovers" and Jews) are destroyed. Storm troopers have to be imported to whip up anti-Semitism.

The frantic activity of the propaganda bureau is an accurate index of the spontaneity of this campaign. And yet—discounting the blackmailers, criminals, warped human wreckage for whom the Germany of today is a paradise—how could this happen? Why is it possible? This book is valuable as the significant data of how the lowest human instincts can be organized by a government fighting to preserve a system doomed by the condemnation of the highest human instincts.

ELEANOR SHOEMAKER.

Rehearsal for Street Performance Pearl Binder

In Search of Pure Art

STRAVINSKY, AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY. *Simon & Schuster.* $3.

THIS autobiography reminds me of Krupskaya's memoirs of Lenin. Not only are the incidents of personal life similarly reduced to a minimum, but there is the same odor of struggle. It is as if the self-dedication required of an artist to realize his aims in contemporary capitalist society had to be as complete and vigilant as that of the revolutionary. For hostility to art in contemporary capitalist society has been overpowering, though carried on without the apparatus of court and police. It has been effective merely by maintaining such an order of life that the artist could find in it no sources, and no audience able to do more than receive sensations—Stravinsky calls it drugs.

The struggle to be an artist within the terms of late capitalist society has followed these alternatives. Approval being almost impossible, the artist (within, of course, a very wide range between the two) could either produce art critical of the system, or outside of it. Pure art, resigning every effort to contain meaning, has attempted the latter, has sought to be independent of society. There is a touching passage in Stravinsky's autobiography where, speaking of *Œdipus Rex,* the libretto of which was in a dead language, he writes:

> What a joy it is to compose music to a language of convention. . . . One no longer feels dominated by the phrase . . . the text thus becomes purely phonetic material to the composer. He can dissect it at will and concentrate all his attention on its primary constituent element, the syllable.

One is reminded of the "ecstasy" of Hindu mystics attaining the state of Samadhi, or non-life, an understandable aim in a society which stratified in its caste system thirty centuries of foreign rule, oppression, and humiliation, the straining for "non-life" being an eloquent commentary upon life in such a society. The phenomenal quest for "pure" art in our time—a quest never known before, to the same degree, in Western civilization—is a similarly eloquent commentary upon the conditions of culture in a declining capitalist society where the arts, heavily adulterated, have been turned, like the very passions and dreams of men, into commodities for exploitation.

The search for a pure music is especially striking in Stravinsky's case, since his first sources were the popular arts: folk tales for his subjects, folk airs for his musical themes. At one period he imitated ragtime. Stravinsky gives no other explanation than "development" for his change. Perhaps he realized that the return to folk music was nostalgic, that the folk arts were mostly dead, dissolved by the capitalism that had broken up the villages and sent their populations into the industrial towns where they could not develop a culture of their own and were left without any until it was found profitable to sell to them a debasement of culture in the music-hall and the penny press. Perhaps, also, without being aware of it, he had shared in the internationalist idealism of the pre-war, war, and early Versailles periods, and had turned to pure "art," as did so many artists in every field, for expression of post-war disillusion. Those, however, who, since the world crisis, have clung to pure art, are very few, and are now reactionaries in art, and, most of them, in politics. Is Stravinsky, who holds himself, in public, so aloof from politics, also a reactionary?

He offers no other reason for the unpopularity of his music in Russia save that a prophet is not honored in his own country. While in none of his remarks referring to post-revolutionary Russia does he make an absolute judgment, the remarks are all complaints. And this becomes significant when he comments on Italy, for which his "admiration is increased by the marvelous regenerative effort there." This political attitude is to be ex-

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pected of a man who lost estates in a revolution and who, during much of his career, has depended for audition and publication of his works on the patronage of the rich. But it explains also his persistence in pure "art," which now is no longer a repudiation of contemporary society but a repudiation of the future as well.

It is valuable to read this book, which reveals so much more than it intends. It cannot be said that it shows this indubitably great composer either as a first-order mind or as a talented writer. But in its self-consciously austere fashion it is intelligent, earnest, and, toward individuals, just. Intelligence, from a reactionary, is rare enough to be noteworthy.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Black Capitalists

THE NEGRO AS CAPITALIST, *by Abram L. Harris. The American Academy of Political and Social Science.* $3.

THE American frontier never opened wide to the Negro—never afforded him even the measure of psychological escape with which it served the white man. But this has not prevented the black man from spinning his black version of the American dream. The introverted group life which has been forced upon the Negro has led him to invent his own psychology of escape. The longing to tear loose from his chains and to throw off his oppressive burdens has found expression in his religious life and has been the motivating force behind such fantastic schemes as Garveyism, the "back to Africa" or Negro Zionist movement, and the spasmodic agitation for the creation of a forty-ninth (black) state. But the hue and cry for Negro business, predicated upon the acquisition of the cardinal virtues of thrift and commercial perspicacity, has been at once the most persistent and the most serious of these escape manifestations among American Negroes—actively among the petty bourgeois, and passively among the masses.

The study under consideration is ostensibly an analysis of Negro banking, but it finds ample occasion to expose the flimsy hopes and crude strivings of an exceedingly pathetic Negro middle class which, though straining every sinew to emulate its white counterpart, has never been and can never be much more than the product of wishful thinking; a hope, a prayer, and a caricature.

The author establishes the utter futility of this naïve attempt of the Negro to lift himself out of his economic class by frantically tugging at his own economic bootstraps. The plain fact is that "Negro business" must always remain captive within the black ghetto, which, moreover, is almost invariably poverty-stricken. There is no open road to the greater productive processes of industry for Negro business. Consequently the Negro middle class perpetuates itself only as a strictly parasitic class depending for its living on enterprises whose only chance for continued existence is the segregated community and the prejudices, inhibitions, and practices that make it necessary. That is to say, Negro business is Jim-Crow business, thrives on Jim Crow, and any attack on the practice of Jim-Crowism is a threat against the economic life-blood of the Negro middle class. Dr. Harris points out that though the Negro's hope of developing a separate black economy dates back to pre-Civil War days, the idea has gained increased popularity since the depression due to the "differential disadvantages suffered by the Negro masses as compared with the white." Two schools of thought characterize the movement: that inspired by Booker T. Washington, which optimistically hopes to build the black economy on a competitive and private-profit basis; and that now led by Du Bois, which proposes to mobilize and direct the purchasing power of the black masses, either through the organization of coöperatives or the initiation of boycotts—"don't buy where you can't work." Dr. Harris aptly states that such movements are part and parcel of "the struggle of American workers to achieve economic power within the present institutional framework."

And what of the Negro banks? Organized, beginning with the Freedmen's Bank, in response to the Negro's aspirations toward attaining "respectability," and as a logical and essential parallel to the general devolopment of Negro business, their history, with rare exceptions, is one of dismal failure, inevitable, as the author demonstrates, since, apart from dishonest or incompetent management (or both), and speculation, loan security rested too heavily upon Negro real estate, continually "frozen" because it is not easily marketable, earning assets lacked diversification, etc. But more important than these factors, according to Dr. Harris, are "the inherent characteristics of Negro business enterprise. . . . The Negro bank is small because Negro business is." In truth, though predicated upon the "need" for serving Negro business enterprise, the author states that the records fail to show that Negro banks rendered much assistance to agriculture, though this remains the main enterprise in which Negroes are engaged for profit in the South. These banks existed as long as they did only because of their ability to gather in over their counters the penny savings of Negro workers. And the Negro worker bore the main burden of their frequent failures.

Maurice Becker

Dr. Harris views the Negro banker, along with every other "Negro business man," as an "uneconomic man," and finds no real economic justification for the Negro bank. Pointing out that the extension of branch banking will probably destroy the independence of the Negro bank, he concludes that "if the weeding out of high-cost small enterprises, whether white or black, is the price of a safer and sounder banking system, it should be paid for the sake of economy." The Negro banker, like other Negro entrepreneurs, is discovering that Negro life in American capitalistic society simply does not offer the economic basis for the perpetuation of a significant black bourgeoisie.

RALPH J. BUNCHE.

In Quest of Integration

SHERSTON'S PROGRESS, *by Siegfried Sassoon. Doubleday, Doran & Co.* $2.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON has already told in *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* about his one-man revolt against the war. Deciding that the war was futile and unjust, he announced this fact to his superiors, and awaited the consequences. Since he was an officer and a gentleman, it was naturally assumed that he was suffering from some mental disorder, and he was sent to a hospital for the shell-shocked.

Sherston's Progress, the third volume in his slightly fictionalized autobiography, tells what happened. He fell into the hands of W. H. R. Rivers, a psychiatrist who immediately won his respect. Under Rivers's influence, Sassoon —or Sherston, as he calls himself in the book—determined to go back to the trenches. If the masses of men were fighting and dying, there was only one way for him to preserve his sanity and self-respect: he must fight and die too. Discharged from the hospital, he was sent to Ireland and thence to Egypt and Palestine. But with the German advance of the spring of 1918, his regiment was recalled to France, and he again went into action. His service was of short duration, however, for he was wounded, through his own recklessness and the over-zealousness of one of his men, and was sent home to England.

In this volume, as in its predecessors, one is impressed by Sassoon's effort to be honest. He knows that his revolt, looked at from the outside, came to a miserable anti-climax. From one point of view, he realizes, his decision may be regarded as cowardly. On the other hand, it was not an easy decision to carry out, and, with a careful avoidance of over-emphasis, he describes some of his bad moments. His diary, especially as it describes his weeks in France, is a touching record, a

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record all the more poignant for its reticence.

One is also impressed, again as in the other volumes, by Sassoon's poetic gifts, his powers of description and evocation. These are best displayed in the section on his experiences in Ireland, for his life was then more nearly normal, and he writes with gusto of the Mister and his other fox-hunting companions. But there are effective scenes in the account of hospital life, especially the story of his having tea with an astronomer instead of waiting for the medical board, and the diary contains many memorable passages.

The great importance of the book, however, lies, it seems to me, in the implications of Sassoon's cure. From the point of view of Rivers, Sassoon was certainly a sick man when he arrived at the hospital: though it is normal for a man to risk being killed in war, it is not normal for him to expose himself, in cold blood, to the danger of being killed by a firing squad. Rivers's job was to restore Sassoon to normality. He succeeded, and Sassoon went back to the trenches.

This, I think, is the way in which psychiatry almost invariably—though not necessarily—functions. So far as the maladjusted Sassoon was concerned, integration was possible either in terms of revolt or in terms of conformity. There were opponents of the war whose sanity even Rivers could not have questioned. They were integrated because they understood why the war was fought, knew what they were doing, and were conscious of fellowship with their comrades throughout the world. Rivers might have guided Sassoon to that kind of integration, but even to suggest the possibility is ludicrous.

From his own point of view, no doubt, Rivers was right, but I think Sassoon was tricked. When he was in the hospital with his wound, he thought, "How could I begin my life all over again when I had no conviction about anything except that the War was a dirty trick which had been played on me and my generation?" Then Rivers appeared: "He did not tell me that I had done my best to justify his belief in me. He merely made me feel that he took all that for granted, and now we must go on to something better still. And this was the beginning of the new life toward which he had shown me the way." What has "the new life" been for Sassoon and his generation? Perhaps he will write more volumes of his memoirs to tell us, but I think we already know the answer.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

C. C. Allen

"We can't do a thing with him. He insists you take a loyalty oath."

Too Pretty

PRETTY BOY, *by William Cunningham. Vanguard Press.* $2.

CUNNINGHAM'S objective is worthy. He has attempted to show in this novelized life of "Pretty Boy" Floyd the conditioning of a mind to crime by the rottenness and inequality innate in the capitalist system. Had he concerned himself only with the exploits of this slain bank robber and "Public Enemy No. 1," the result would undoubtedly have been a very well written, if sentimental, thriller, and there would be no reason for taking up the space of this column with it. But in view of the fact that Cunningham has endeavored to hinge this sociological factor onto the story, we are very much concerned with it, how he does it, the convincingness of his attempt.

Convincing it is not. At no time does this explanatory factor more than hinge loosely to the body of the story. "Pretty Boy's" opining that he and his stripe are no worse than the bankers, finds hearty acquiescence in the reader, not because of the sympathy the author has engendered in us for "Pretty Boy," but because the reader has watched the plundering since long before "Pretty Boy" looted his first till.

The "Pretty Boys," the Dillingers, the "Baby Faces," in real life were tough babies, and what sentiment was dammed up in their psychopathic heads and hearts was usually drooled out to flinty Ladies in Red who eventually turned them over to the G-men. *True Detective Story* readers who like their "cop-killers" straight will not like Cunningham's wax-work "Pretty Boy," who did not kill ten cops, as the original was supposed to have done, but no more than one or two and then more or less accidentally.

Cunningham's portrayal of "Pretty Boy's" home life in the Oklahoma hills is well done and harks back to the old fire he registered in *Green Corn Rebellion.* The squalor, the poverty, the hand-to-mouth existence is a fit prelude to a career of bank robbing. When "Pretty Boy" thinks of marrying and bringing his bride home to the clapboard shack his family live in, and sees her "pouring cold, greasy dishwater, with nasty little hunks of stuff floating in it, into a black slop bucket and then rubbing her finger around the pan to collect a snotty ring of grease and wipe it off on the edge of the slop bucket," Cunningham sees his course clearly and follows it. And when "Pretty Boy" holds up his first payroll, gets caught, does his stretch, Cunningham is convincing for he is following the tried and true course of the actual flesh-and-blood "Pretty Boy."

It is when his character becomes motivated by instincts that would do credit to a Robin Hood or a Claude Duval that the book disintegrates into fake melodrama. At one time "Pretty Boy" is robbing banks and supporting fifty poor Oklahoma hill families on the proceeds. The harried life of the hunted makes for generosity. His need for hideouts makes it necessary for him to make himself worth more alive than dead. Perhaps "Pretty Boy" was generous beyond this need, but for "Pretty Boy" to take upon his shoulders the responsibility of feeding these people by the hazardous occupation of bank robbing seems a story a little too tall.

William Cunningham has manifestly created a character in "Pretty Boy" who is a blend of the real and the unbelievable. Were it Cunningham's intention to throw together a thriller for the pulps, it would be a useless gesture to knock any chips from his shoulder. It is his right to create all the rattle-brained characters the market will bear. But it is perfectly obvious that Cunningham is sincere in his attempt to show the influence of the system on the "Public Enemy" type. He has attempted a serious work and failed, not because of a lack of sincerity or craftsmanship, but because he created a character in the first place who did not belong on the stage on which he was forced to act. A "Pretty Boy," to have any validity in what Cunningham is trying to show, must have qualities that identify him with his class. Bank robbers run to type, and to show the evolution of this type through the example of one character, that character must approximate his type even while retaining his own personal traits. This has been Cunningham's failure, and while it

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is a great failure with regard to this one book, it in no wise lessens the belief that this author will write better books.

TOM KROMER.

Out of the Embers

PHŒNIX: THE POSTHUMOUS PAPERS OF D. H. LAWRENCE, *edited and with an introduction by Edward D. McDonald. The Viking Press.* $3.50.

THIS large and good-looking book contains all, or practically all, of Lawrence's uncollected papers; not, as one might suppose from the word "posthumous," merely the scraps left unpublished at his death. Writings gathered from old periodicals and rare and limited editions make up about two-thirds of the volume; the rest, including a ninety-page study of Thomas Hardy, a tract on democracy, another on education, and "The Flying Fish," a fragmentary novel, were taken from Lawrence's unpublished files. Altogether *Phœnix* is an important contribution to the published works of Lawrence. It is comprehensive: it covers his entire career, his many moods, his best sides and his worst. It shows him on the one hand as a brilliant and independent critic of the modern world, a painter of splendid sensuous imagery; and on the other hand as just a machine-hater, a dilletante reformer, a pre-Raphaelite crusader against industrial drabness, a rather gaga primitivist, a super-tourist who made a great mystery of the "spirit of place" and of racial and national differences, an impressionist who wanted desperately to give his impressionism the intensity and weight of a religion.

If this collection contributes little to our essential knowledge of Lawrence, at least it provides our already formed conceptions with a wealth of documentation, particularly relating to his latest period. To this period belong the Hardy essay (which has little to do with Hardy) and the semi-political tracts mentioned above. Long, garrulous, bullying, and cockily assertive, these essays are nevertheless enlightening, for they show Lawrence in his last years very much preoccupied (and preoccupied on an almost theoretical level) with society and the individual and man's present estrangement from other men and from the physical world. This idea of estrangement appears to have been basic with Lawrence, and his other characteristic ideas, concerning sex and marriage and the instinctive life, would seem to have flowed directly from it. Moreover, his own values in human relations were as sound, essentially, as his condemnations of modern society were savage and inspired ". . . these strong careless fish [he wrote in "The Flying Fish"]. Men have not got in them that secret to be alive together and make one like a single laugh, yet each fish going his own gait. . . . What civilization will bring us to such a pitch of swift laughing togetherness?"

His values, thus, were not unlike our own, not unlike those which will presently be realized under communism. Yet Lawrence's values, sympathetic as they were, sprang not from hope but from nostalgia, and, so far as he was concerned, could be realized only by a fairly literal reversion to the primitive. With the philistinism of the post-war æsthete, he confused materialism with commercialism, ignored the value to human freedom of science and technology, and thus rejected communism, of which he was sharply aware but which he made no effort to understand. He just *felt* that it was wrong, and with Lawrence feelings were decisive. This restless globe-trotter never visited the Soviet Union. He just felt that that was wrong too. "Bolshevist Russia, one feels, and feels with bitter regret, is nothing new on the face of the earth. It is only a sort of America. And no matter how many revolutions take place, all we can hope for is different sorts of America." Because: "there is no new baby in the womb of society." The damage done to Lawrence's mind by the cult of feeling, of mere private intuiting, is well illustrated in this bit of adolescent nihilism. The world revolted him and drove him more and more upon his ego and his philosophy of inspiration, until, whirling in his separate orbit, abandoning pretty completely objective study, permitting the faith in instinct to become a paralyzing dogma, he could discover no clue anywhere in the outside world to any workable solution of the world's problems. The result was bitterness on the one hand and on the other a personal mysticism which, even as mysticism, contains a large percentage of highly colored sugar-water.

F. W. DUPEE.

Brief Reviews of Fiction

CALEB CATLUM'S AMERICA, *by Vincent McHugh. Illustrated by George T. Hartmann. Stackpole Sons.* $2.50.

All—well, practically all—of the beautiful scenery, startling events, and interesting people in America for the last three hundred years have been got by Mr. McHugh in these 340 well-filled pages. It is a spinning out, in episodic continuity, of the tall tale. It has a not-too-much-insisted-upon symbolism: Caleb Catlum as the folk hero and the piccolo-playing Traders (read capitalists) as the antagonist and villain. It is well salted with satiric wit, very pleasing in not too large doses—even Rabelais goes best read in instalments.

I. S.

STANDING ROOM ONLY, *by Walter Greenwood. Doubleday, Doran & Co.* $2.

Walter Greenwood wrote two novels, of which the earlier and better, *Love on the Dole,* was made into a play by Mr. Greenwood and somebody-or-other. Somebody-or-other, I assume, was a good play doctor, and the result of his labors was a combination of moving scenes from the novel and sure-fire hokum. This combination was a great success in London, and didn't do too badly in New York.

Standing Room Only is obviously the outcome of Mr. Greenwood's excursion into the theatrical world. That is, its material comes from that experience. So, perhaps, do the vices of this uncommonly shoddy piece of work. A local boy, Henry Omerod, writes a play. It is taken in hand by a stock-character producer, who hires a stock-character director, very cynical, and a stock-character star, very beautiful, and finds a stock-character angel, very vulgar but good-hearted. The beautiful star, strangely enough, is seduced by the wealth of the

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vulgar angel. The manager falls in love with the play doctor, who falls in love with the director. Henry—who, by the way, has a stock-character mother, very grimly sensible, and a stock-character father, very drunken—is caught by the local girl. She might be described as a stock-character local girl.

This, from an author who was making some contribution to British literature of working-class life, is an insult. There are some bad moments in both *Love on the Dole* and *The Time Is Ripe*, but their worst is better than the best in *Standing Room Only*. We had better assume, in all charity, that Mr. Greenwood has had a temporary lapse, and try to forget about it. GRANVILLE HICKS.

DAVID AND JOANNA, *by George Blake. Henry Holt.* $2.

Mr. Blake's book concerns itself with nothing more than a strapping Scotch boy and a pretty Scotch girl in love with each other in a world where conventions set up barriers, and liberating employment and money are hard to get at.

Blake does a beautiful job. The fullness of his characterizations and the excellence of his prose distinguish his book. He is, however, a romantic. He has his young couple solve their problems simply by running away from Glasgow and wandering for a summer all over the Scottish moors. Ultimately winter comes; the real world encroaches upon the idyll. David and Joanna return to Glasgow—David to a very poor job in a beer garden, Joanna to household drudgery and the having of a baby. Blake chooses to close his book just when the first sharp assault of disillusion forces from Joanna a stubborn reaffirmation of the possibilities of escape.

It is, of course, easy to quarrel with Blake's notion that "freedom and peace" will ever be attained through escape. Nevertheless, he has written a very genuine and, at times, a moving book; and his sense of the dilemmas of poverty, and his sure touch in character make it a fair expectation that he will take his characters beyond escape in succeeding flights. PETER YORK.

KING COLE, *by W. R. Burnett. Harper & Bros.* $2.50.

Where does Burnett stand? In his book, which also demonstrates that it *can* happen here, he shows the transformation of a liberal governor into a fascist reactionary. The implications are that fascism is not nice. But in the *dramatis personae* the fascist is given the usual charms of a fictional hero, the representative of the masses is misrepresented as a drunken scarecrow, and in the course of the story terrorism is indicated to be a normal part of the program of progressives. The book is loosely written. In spite of expert dialogue, characterizations come through like mediocre sculpture—plenty of flesh, no bone. P. Y.

DEATH IN THE DEEP SOUTH, *by Ward Greene. Stackpole Sons.* $2.

The American murder case, which has become perhaps the biggest of American sports, is the subject of Mr. Greene's new novel. The murder case he selects is an imaginary one, but it is more or less a composite of nearly every front-page murder trial of recent years.

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or to "influence" the witnesses; he shows racial and sectional prejudices used to sway public and jury opinion; uncertain jurymen threatened and bribed into delivering a verdict agreeable to the prosecuting attorney, who can't afford to lose the case even though he realizes the holes in the circumstantial evidence he piles up.

In dealing with this gruesome spectacle, Mr. Greene has revealed the American mind bludgeoned to its lowest level by the influence of institutions that comprise capitalistic civilization. The author is no Dostoievsky; frequently journalistic in his approach, he skims surfaces that need penetrating. Nonetheless, the shocking implications of his material are all here. They make the old Roman days of throwing people to the lions look very civilized indeed.

JERRE MANGIONE.

ROOT, HOG, AND DIE, *by George Dixon Snell. The Caxton Printers.* $2.50.

Mr. Snell renews an unfamiliar, yet typical, part of the American scene, the Mormon migration into Utah and the wayside utopias en route. It is a three-generations story—from Jim, the pioneer, who later becomes a patriarch in the church, to young Mark, killed in a strike at his father's mine.

But don't be alarmed—this is not an anti-labor tract. A historical novel, it traces the Mormon church as an institution from its semi-communal origin amidst constant persecution from "gentiles" down to its present status as a huge capitalist corporation controlling the Utah sugar-beet industry.

In spite of certain weaknesses in style—especially in the descriptive passages—the tale moves briskly. The shortcomings in literary finish are more than made up for by its solid plot construction motivating real human beings. *Root, Hog, and Die* is a worthy contribution to left-wing literature.

ROBERT GOLDSMITH.

★

Also Published This Week

A listing of important new books not necessarily recommended.)

Across Spoon River, by Edgar Lee Masters. Farrar & Rinehart. $3.50. Autobiography.

The Life and Adventures of John Nicol, Mariner. Farrar & Rinehart. $4. Letters and narratives of a seaman.

The Flight of Big Horse, by Sven Hedin. Dutton. $3.75. Travel, exploration, war in Central Asia.

Journey Without Maps, by Graham Greene. Doubleday, Doran. $2.75. Travels in Liberia.

Recently Recommended

More Poems, by A. E. Housman. Knopf. $2.

Lincoln Steffens Speaking. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50. A collection of Steffens's essays, sketches, etc.

Three Worlds, by Carl Van Doren. Harper. $3. Autobiography.

All Brides Are Beautiful, by Thomas Bell. Little, Brown. $2.50. Novel.

An American Testament, by Joseph Freeman. Farrar & Rinehart. $3. Autobiography. Book Union choice for October.

Calling Western Union, by Genevieve Taggard. Harper & Bros. New York. $2.

Ideas of Order, by Wallace Stevens. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

Seven Red Sundays, by Ramon J. Sender. Liveright. $2.50.

Brandeis, The Personal History of an American Ideal, by Alfred Lief. Stackpole. $3.

Spain in Revolt, by Harry Gannes and Theodore Repard. Knopf. $2.

World Politics, 1918-1936, by R. Palme Dutt. Regular Edition, Random House. $2.50. Popular Edition, International. $2.

The Trouble I've Seen, by Martha Gellhorn. Morrow. $2.50.

The Bells of Basel, by Louis Aragon. Translated from the French by Haakon M. Chevalier. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50. Revolutionary novel.

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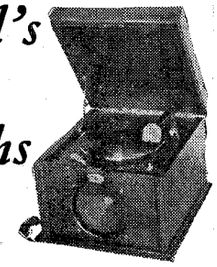

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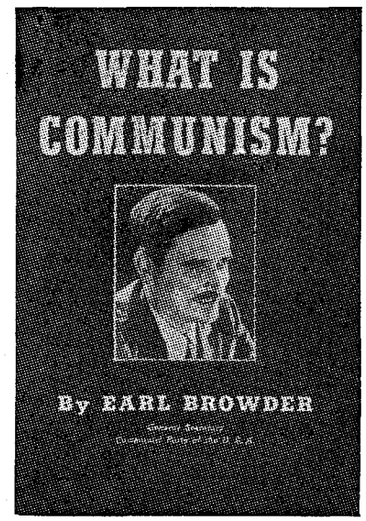

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

"It Can't Happen Here" dramatized—A Soviet color film—Bach, Brahms, and some others

AS there came to a close the election campaign the chief issue of which, the Communists said, was the issue of democracy versus fascism, there opened simultaneously in twenty-one playhouses and several languages an avowedly anti-fascist play by an American author of top-flight international reputation. The fact that it was produced by the federal W.P.A. theater, after Hollywood suppressed it and Broadway would have none of it, gave a new meaning to the "defeat Landon" slogan, because the Landon campaign propagandists, as exemplified by the *Saturday Evening Post,* have viciously attacked the federal theater project as subversive boondoggling. Under a Landon administration, this anti-fascist play, at the best, would have been lucky if it got a showing by one labor or experimental theater.

What I am getting at is this: the mere fact that such a play as *It Can't Happen Here* is produced on such a scale under such auspices in such a historical setting should be regarded as an important victory for the friends of freedom and progress, a victory which they should hail and celebrate.

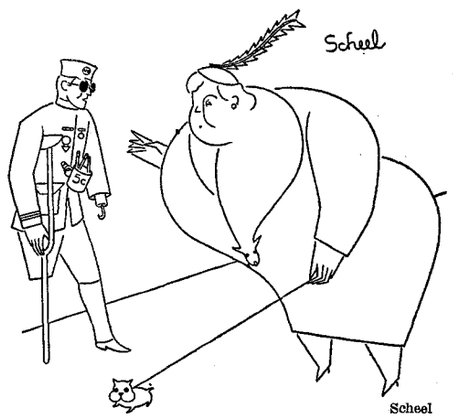
What of the play as anti-fascist propaganda and as entertainment? On both scores it is deserving of praise and blame. The foolish and unjust touch of Red-baiting which marred the novel is absent. While the name fascist is not applied, the nature and direction of the dictatorship is indicated with fair clarity by the fact that the Corpos are supported by the steel trust and attack trade unions and burn books. And their tricks of demagogy should be a fair inoculation for the innocent. At the same time, the fascist dictator is too incredible a caricature, and the motivation of the movement is presented too much in the light of his psychopathic lust for power rather than as the last desperate effort of a decaying capitalism to organize and perpetuate its putrescence. And there is no concrete political solution suggested which the audience, leaving the theater, can begin to put into practice.

These very shortcomings, paradoxically, rather contribute to the interest a politically sophisticated audience will find in the play, in the same way that the vicissitudes of a political campaign or a strike are of absorbing interest to those involved. And the close-up of the effect of the reactionary wave on the small New England town of Fort Beulah carries over into the play the tenseness and vividness of the book. You will find Jessup somewhat less vital behind the footlights, and other characters somewhat altered for better or worse. But, taken as a whole, the dramatization which John C. Moffit and Mr. Lewis have worked out contains enough truth and vitality to make it a significant step forward in the American theater. A. W. T.

THE SCREEN

THE Soviet cinema found its voice with *Road to Life,* released by Amkino in 1932. And now Nikolai Ekk, that film's director, gives us the first Soviet feature in color, *Nightingale,* now showing at the New York Cameo. Whatever else may be said for or against its color and the director's use of color or its general effect on the development of the color film, *Nightingale* is a stirring and exciting melodrama of the horrible period of reaction and terror in Russia of 1910-12. It was during this period that the owner of the famous Kuznetzova chinaware plant burned his wooden factory one Christmas night so that he might build a nice new brick plant with the insurance money. That dozens of women and children were cremated alive didn't matter. Some time later the women discovered that the fire was deliberate and that their mothers and sisters were murdered. Thousands of them revolted against the management and later fought soldiers and their guns with plates, vases, and soup tureens. That is history and that is the film. It is the final third which dramatizes the revolt and the battle in one of the most exciting melodramatic episodes ever filmed.

Ekk's contribution to the revolutionary cinema is more technical than dramatic. Working under the handicap of a primitive two-color process rather than the so-called perfect three-color Technicolor process, Ekk has given us a film which not only is as good, but is superior to any color film produced in Hollywood. True, sometimes the register is not very precise. But Ekk has at least made an attempt to use color dramatically. *Becky Sharp* was produced with that in mind, but there was nothing especially dramatic about it. Many of the *Nightingale* sequences are very successful in their use of color for dramatic purposes. Outstanding is the one in which the factory girls read the leaflet accusing the owner of murder and incendiarism. The final sequence against the red brick factory and the thousands of women in their colored costumes throwing thousands of white dishes doesn't lose anything, certainly, for being in color. Whether or not *Nightingale* would have been a better film in black and white or even just as good is certainly debatable. Indeed, the whole idea of color in cinema is still debatable. The main drawback to prolific experimentation with color is the enormous cost involved —at least four times that of black and white. Ekk not only directed *Nightingale,* but he wrote the scenario and also plays a leading role. The acting of the rest of the cast, mostly women, is on the usual high Soviet level.



"What you need is a little dog to lead you."

The Legion of Terror, Columbia Pictures' quickie on the Black Legion, is everything but a real exposé of the activities of that notorious organization. It avoids any positive attack and muffs the greatest dramatic opportunity in years. The story, of course, gets personal about the "Hooded Legion" and its personal revenge on a young steel worker who "talks too much." What this young worker says that should make the Legion sore is left a mystery. All of the characters are mechanical and melodramatic in the usual sense. One can be grateful, I suppose, that the producers didn't make the Legion out to be a radical outfit. You will be amazed to learn that the Post Office Investigators (the new G-men) are doing their best to rid this country of the Legion.

A Woman Rebels (R.K.O.-Radio) is the usual nostalgic Hepburn film about a "modernist" in a victorian setting, and *In His Steps,* the first offering of the newly formed Grand National company, is ordinary sentimental, moralistic, homespun drama. *Ladies in Love* (20th Century-Fox), with Janet Gaynor, Loretta Young, Constance Bennett, *and* Simone Simon is a complete waste of time. The latest issue of *The March of Time* contains a sequence on the C.I.O.—A.F. of L. fight which muddles the issues somewhat but the effect of which, on the whole, is favorable to the C.I.O. There is also an interesting section on the tithe war between the Anglican church and the English farmers.

At New York's Cinema de Paris is the original French version of *Les Miserables,* which was bought up by United Artists to prevent competition with their American film. They certainly knew what they were about when they prevented the simultaneous release of the two versions, for this original not only has greater fidelity to the novel but is superior in every way. Director Jacques Raymond may not shake the world with his creative ingenuity, but he has produced a fine, moving, and above all honest film. When I first viewed this *Les Miserables,* it ran for three solid hours. The management has wisely

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removed a great deal of the boring and extraneous material, but even so it runs well over two hours. Harry Baur as Valjean and as the peasant who is mistaken for Valjean, does a beautiful and sensitive bit of acting. You might argue that Charles Laughton's conception of Jarvet, the police-inspector menace of the story, is sounder than the interpretation given it by the French actor. I won't argue that point.

PETER ELLIS.

MUSIC

NOVEMBER will be an expensive month for record buyers, for there is almost a superfluity of valuable discs headed by the Schweitzer album of Bach organ preludes and fugues, the Budapest Quartet version of the Bartok string quartet in A minor, the Brahms waltzes and intermezzi played by Bachaus, and such minor items as Koussevitzky's new "Unfinished" of Schubert, the Brahms C-major trio by Hess, D'Aranyi, and Cassado, and a delightful Tansman *Suite Divertissement.*

Undoubtedly the most impressive of the releases is the American pressing of the Schweitzer Bach (Columbia album 270). In honor of the occasion Columbia has upped the price of the records and included a lucid exposition of the themes by Harvey Grace, the British critic — something which should serve as a model for other companies. The recording of the organ is exemplary, the playing only slightly pedantic, and the music overwhelming: the fantasia and fugue in G minor, prelude and fugue in F minor, toccata and fugue in D minor, the preludes and fugues in C and G major, and the "Little" fugue in G minor. Albert Schweitzer is perhaps the greatest living authority on Bach, which makes the purchase of this volume a necessity to anyone who still believes that the Stokowski arrangements have any relation to the original.

Tucked away in this month's lists is a bit of fluff: Tansman's *Suite Divertissement* for piano, violin, viola, 'cello, played by a Belgian group headed by the pianist Marcel Maas. The music itself is inconsequential, but the treatment could hardly be excelled. The less pretentious dance movements are naturally the most successful, and the players have just the right vitality. Tansman, incidentally, is one of the few composers who have been able to adapt themselves to the task of writing incidental music for the movies. Certainly this is more amusing than most of what has come out of Hollywood (Columbia album X-66).

The Brahms C-major trio is certainly not great music, but the playing of Myra Hess, Yelly D'Aranyi, and Gasper Cassado makes it at least warm and ingratiating. There are not many virtues in Miss D'Aranyi's scratchy violin playing, but she is a good ensemble artist, able to conceal her tonal deficiencies before the microphone. Miss Hess, though slightly affected in the first movement, displays her usual round Matthay tone, and Cassado is an extremely competent 'cellist (Columbia album 266).

I have not yet had a chance to study the new recordings of Verdi's great opera, *Falstaff,* made by the orchestra, chorus, and principals of Milan's La Scala. Temporarily, it is sufficient to say that the work is adequately recorded and occasionally well sung. There is, however, considerable surface noise on the disks (Columbia operatic album 16). The new Meyrowitz version of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* is not appreciably better than the old one of Weingartner. Recorded a few years ago by Pathé, this album won a French "grand prize," but France's recording standards are lamentably low (Columbia album 267).

The Budapest Quartet's interpretation of the Bartok A-minor quartet is in every way a masterpiece (Columbia, M-320). There is probably no chamber music organization that combines the qualities of integrity, rhythmic vitality, and tonal opulence to such a degree as does this foursome. The music is considerably less taxing to the untrained ear than much of Bartok's later work, and there are many moments of great power and beauty.

Instead of giving us the magnificent and practically unrecorded fifth symphony of Schubert (B-flat major), Koussevitsky sees fit to inflict still another version of the B-minor "Unfinished." The recording, echo and all, is superb, and the Boston Symphony has never been in better form on records. The excerpt from the ballet music of *Rosamunde* which makes up the last side is unexpectedly sluggish and heavy (Victor M-321).

Another excellent album from Victor is the collection of piano waltzes (opus 39) and intermezzi of Brahms, played by Wilhelm Bachaus. Perhaps the waltzes are a bit ponderous, but most of the playing is close to technical perfection, and the recording very good.

Decidedly not recommended are the two records of the Bach second Brandenburg concerto, sloppily played by a poor French orchestra under Cortot. The F trumpet is out of tune and forced, the conducting idiosyncrasies of M. Cortot hard to bear, and the records inferior both to the fine Columbia disks, supervised by Adolph Busch, and the adequate Brunswick-Polydors, conducted by Alois Melichar (Victor 11930-1). Thoroughly unexciting is Albert Spalding's interpretation of the hackneyed Tartini "Devil's Trill" sonata (Victor 14139).

HENRY JOHNSON.

★

The Radio

(Times given are Eastern Standard, but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups. Readers are asked to report at once any anti-working-class bias expressed by these artists or their sponsors.)

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Bob Brown (NEW MASSES contributor), with Rose and Cora Brown, an expert cookery trio, in the "Magazine of the Air." Wed., Nov. 11, 11 a.m. Columbia.

Senator Gerald P. Nye. "How to Keep Out of War." Wed., Nov. 11, 10:30 p.m. Columbia.

REGULAR FEATURES

Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, John Barbirolli conducting. Sundays at 3 p.m., Columbia.

Beethoven Sonata Series. Alexander Semmler, pianist. Sundays at 10:30 a.m., Columbia.

Seattle Symphony Orchestra, with Cameron conducting, Thursdays at 8 p.m., Columbia.

Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Barlow conducting. Sundays at 3 p.m., Columbia.

Fred Astaire and Johnny Green's Orchestra. Tuesdays at 9:30 p.m., N.B.C. red.

André Kostelanetz's Orchestra. Wednesdays at 9 p.m. and Fridays at 8:30 p.m., Columbia.

Rudy Vallée's Varieties. Thursdays at 8 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

Eddie Cantor and others. Sundays at 8:30 p.m., Columbia. Rebroadcast to West Coast, 11 p.m.

Burns and Allen. Wednesdays at 8:30 p.m., Columbia.

Willie and Eugene Howard. Wednesdays at 8:30 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

Stoopnagle and Budd. Wednesdays at 9 p.m., N.B.C. red.

Raymond Gram Swing, commenting on international affairs. Fridays at 9 p.m., Mutual.

The March of Time. Thursdays, 10:30 p.m., Columbia.

The Screen

WORTH SEEING

Nightingale, the Soviet Union's first film in color. Cameo, N. Y.

The Devil Is a Sissy. Some clever kids up to high jinks.

The Gay Desperado. Mamoulian directs some enjoyable if synthetic gayety.

Valiant Is the Word for Carrie. Gladys George in a more-or-less credible and well-acted story of a prostitute.

Millions of Us, a fine labor short. Watch for it in your locality.

Nine Days a Queen. Nova Pilbeam and Cedric Hardwicke in a film about Lady Jane Grey.

Dodsworth. A pretty fair film version of the Sinclair Lewis novel.

The Theater

THUMBS UP

It Can't Happen Here. Sinclair Lewis's anti-fascist novel dramatized by the W.P.A., at the following theaters: Adelphi, N. Y.; Majestic, Brooklyn; Jefferson, Birmingham, Ala.; Mayan and Figueroa (Yiddish), Los Angeles; Columbia, San Francisco; Baker, Denver; Park, Bridgeport, Conn.; Palace, Hartford, Conn.; Blackstone, Chicago; Keith, Indianapolis; Repertory, Boston; Lafayette, Detroit; City, Newark, N. J.; Warburton, Yonkers, N. Y.; Carter, Cleveland; Moore, Seattle; Scottish Rite, Tacoma.

Gilbert & Sullivan (Martin Beck, N. Y.). The Rupert D'Oyly Carte company in superlative production of the Savoy operettas. *The Yeomen of the Guard,* which will continue through Saturday, Nov. 7, will be followed by a week's run of *The Gondoliers.*

Ten Million Ghosts (St. James, N. Y.). A vigorous play about munitions makers by the author of *Men in White* and *Dead End.*

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